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THE NEW NORTH-WEST.

FIRST PAPER: THE DAKOTA WHEAT REGION, THE BAD LANDS, AND THE YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY.

THE Red River of the North is the frontier of what is commonly called the New Northwest. It separates the State of Minnesota from the Territory of Dakota. A queer, disappointing, contradictory stream it is, making off due northward when all its neighbors run south, finding an outlet in distant and frigid Lake Winnipeg, and in a highly unpatriotic fashion draining off the waters of one of the richest sections of Uncle Sam's farm into the dominions of the Queen. It is disappointing, because you expect from its imposing name and the great figure it cuts upon the map to find a stream of size and dignity, and discover when you cross it on the railroad bridge between Morehead and Fargo nothing but a dirty, narrow ditch, across which a small boy can pitch a stone. It looks more like a canal than a river, and is so narrow that coves are dug in the banks for the little steamboats to turn around in. Yet this sluggish drain carries off the surplus rainfall of a vast, rich plain, forty miles wide and nearly two hundred long, and has an uncomfortable way in the spring season of rising up to the top of its high banks in a few hours and spreading over the flat country. One day last April it rose thirty-eight feet in a single day and night, submerging the farms and villages. The people do not seem to mind these inundations much, however. There is scarcely any current in the widened stream, and if it lifts a settler's cabin off the ground it sets it down again not far from the original location, and no great harm is done. With the cheerful philosophy of all pioneers the inhabitants of the valley call the river the "Nile of America," and try to convince the new-comer, and themselves too, no doubt, that the overflows are good for the land, while deploring that they are due to the northward course of the river, which breaks up first on its upper waters and is dammed below by the ice in Manitoba.

The two smart towns of Fargo and Morehead look at each other across the muddy Red River ditch with jealous eyes. They will not bridge the stream, because each is afraid the other would profit by a convenient crossing. Vehicles ferry over on a rude flat-boat, worked by hand-power applied to a rope stretched from bank to bank, and pedestrians are beholden to the railroad company for the

use of its bridge. Morehead, the Minnesota town, has three thousand inhabitants; Fargo, the Dakota town, boasts of six thousand, and styles itself the Red River metropolis. Both welter in a sea of black mud in the season of thaws and rains; both are largely devoted to speculation in lots and lands, and both are equally unattractive to the eye. They are in reality a single town, commercially speaking, and a remarkably prosperous one too. The railroad system has made them the business center and distributing-point for the entire Red River Valley, and out of their present jumble of muddy streets, cheap-pine cottages and shanties, vacant lots, saloons, stores, and lumber-piles, will grow up a handsome city of fifty thousand inhabitants within the present generation. Already there is a handsome hotel, rejoicing in the architectural oddities of the Queen Anne craze, a street railway, an electric light company, water-works, half a dozen banks, a daily newspaper, a number of creditable churches and school buildings, and a few pretty dwellings. Real estate speculation runs wild. Visions of a second change have turned the heads of the inhabitants. The talk is all about lots and values—how much this or that corner is worth, what Jones paid for his strip of mud, or what Smith holds his at. The real-estate agents have their offices in the hotels, in order to watch the arrival of guests and seize upon the supposed capitalist seeking investments, or the immigrant looking for a farm. No well-dressed stranger need wait long for the offer of a free ride about the future city and a valuable guide to explain the many choice openings waiting for him and his money.

The spirit of all these far western towns seems essentially sordid. One wearies of the never-ending talk of speculation and schemes for money-getting, but on further acquaintance with these eager, pushing pioneers, each with his exaggerated estimates of his own particular town, he finds that they have as much heart and generosity as the people of old communities, and a great deal more public spirit. Much of their boasting of lucky investments and the rapid growth of values is not altogether in their own selfish interest. They are on the skirmish line of civilization, and they feel bound to make a noise to attract

the attention of the main army and induce it to move up to them.

The Red River Valley is an enormous deposit of rich black loam, almost perfectly level, bounded on the east by the lake-dotted forest region of Northern Minnesota, and on the west by a rolling prairie belt, but of almost equal fertility. There is no waste land save in little depressions which collect surface drainage and are called "slews" (sloughs) in the local parlance. There is a scattered belt of settlement in the valley extending back about ten miles on both sides of the river clear down to Winnipeg, and from east to west across the valley the land is cultivated for about the same distance on each side of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad runs a line down the eastern side of the valley to Winnipeg, and has a second line on the western bank to Grand Forks, the chief town between Fargo and Pembina. The same company is projecting or building two or three other branch lines in the valley, and the Northern Pacific has thrown a branch northward from Casselton, a little town twenty miles west of Fargo, which is working toward south-western Manitoba; it is also building a diagonal line from Fargo southwest to the valley of the James. The competition of railroad lines for the traffic of the Red River country is the best evidence of its great productiveness. Nowhere else in the United States, unless it be in the distant and little known valleys of Eastern Oregon and Washington Territory, are such large crops of wheat raised with such small expense and such certainty of success year after year. The grain is sown late in the spring, as soon as the hot suns of the northern latitude have dried the soaked lands, and grows with marvelous rapidity. By August it is fully mature and ready for reaping. All the farm-work is done by machinery. The plowman rides upon a sulky-plow; the grain is sown with a drill or a broad-caster; the reaping-machines bind the sheaves as they move over the ground, and the threshers do their work in the fields driven by portable steam-engines that burn the straw for fuel. The grain is hauled at once to elevators at the nearest railway station, and then the whole farm equipment of apparatus is left standing in the fields until needed the next year. Except on the big "bonanza farms," owned and operated by capitalists, it is rare to find any sheds for implements, or, indeed, any farm-buildings save a little bare box of a dwelling, and a rude stable of boards, sod and straw, to shelter the horses from the winter blizzards. The red barns of the bonanza farms make a great show upon the wild, vacant prairie, but they

are not much larger than thrifty Pennsylvania farmers, who till a hundred acres, build to house their crops and stock.

It is within bounds to say that, taking one year with another, a profit of ten dollars an acre is made on the Red River wheat-lands, after paying all expenses of seed, cultivation, and marketing. The great merit of this magnificent grain-field does not lie wholly in its richness, however. Its structure is peculiarly favorable for the transportation of its product to the seaboard. Two hundred and fifty miles of rail transit brings the Red River wheat to Duluth at the head of Lake Superior, from whence there is water-carriage all the way to New York harbor. Dakota seems to have been fitted by nature for a vast, permanent wheat-field. The conditions of climate and soil exist for producing the best grade of wheat and the largest average crops harvested for a succession of years in the United States, except, perhaps, Washington Territory.

From Fargo to Bismarck by rail is a day's journey, the distance being one hundred and ninety-seven miles, and the road running almost as straight as the crow flies. For about forty miles the country is flat, and the landscapes seen from the car-windows would be tame were it not for the vast sweep of vision, which produces upon the mind something of the exhilarating effect of the view from the deck of a ship at sea. All objects on the horizon, the homesteader's shanty, the straw stack, or the plowmen at work with their teams, stand out sharply against the sky and seem magnified to more than twice their real size. Here are no trees save the belts of alders and cottonwoods that fringe the Cheyenne and the Maple rivers, two pretty streams that wander here and there over the plain as if in doubt where to go, and finally, after dithering again and again in their tracks, manage to find the Red River. They serve but scantily the purpose of drainage, however, for when I traversed Dakota in early May (1882), many square miles of land near their banks were submerged by the spring rains and thousands of acres of wheat-fields were converted into lakes and ponds. The farmer suffers small detriment from these inundations, however, for the sun and wind working together rarely fail to dry the ground in time for plowing.

Casselton, twenty miles west of Fargo, is a smart little market town of perhaps one thousand inhabitants. Beyond, the country gradually changes from flat to rolling prairie, and is much more agreeable to the eye. A little hamlet, living upon buying wheat and selling goods, is found every ten or fifteen miles. Each aspires to be a city, and each

ridicules the pretensions of its neighbors unmercifully. Tower City boasts of its artesian well and of its prohibition ordinance, which keeps out the saloon, that curse of frontier towns. It has a weekly newspaper. So has Valley City, which got down too close to a stream and was flooded in the May freshet. The Tower City editor taunted his *confrère* of the neighboring town with being forced to "paddle to his grub-counter in a wagon-box." Whereupon the Valley City editor remarked in his next issue that it was true that his place was not as "dry" as Tower City, and he hoped it never would be. Both these active, ambitious little settlements are surpassed in population by Jamestown, which has a pretty situation on a high shale shelf in a bend of the James or Dakota river, in an amphitheatre formed by a sweep of bold green bluffs that look like the glacis of some immense fortification. The place used to be called Jimtown, but has quite outgrown the nickname. It has perhaps fifteen hundred inhabitants, and already supports a daily paper. In older communities, a town of ten thousand with a thickly populated country tributary to it will barely sustain a little daily, but in the far West the daily appears about as soon as the church-steeple. How these sheets live is a mystery to journalists. They are probably sustained by merchants and real-estate owners as an appliance for "booming" a town. To "boom" a town in Dakota is an art requiring a little money, a good deal of printers' ink, and no end of push and cheek. Dropping the quotation-marks, for the word in its various forms is one of the most common in north-western phraseology and answers equally well for a noun or a verb, the object of a boom is to attract settlers, advance the price of real estate, and promote speculation. Fargo is said to be the best-boomed town in Dakota. As a specimen of skillful booming, here is a paragraph from the circular of a Fargo real-estate operator:

"We have anything you want, and at any price. We can sell you a City or Country Home, and if you ever come near our office, we will do it. The preachers will look after your moral and spiritual welfare and we will take care of your temporal affairs; and if you come our way, it shall never be said, when a final settlement is had, that you were like one of the foolish virgins of old who wrapped her talent in a napkin and sunk it in a well. (See New Version.) On the contrary, your record shall be that of the good husbandman, who put his wheat in good, rich Red River valley soil, and it produced a thousand fold, and it came to pass that he, who had nothing, had more ducats than he knew what to do with."

Another real-estate dealer bursts into rhyme in the heading of his announcements in this fashion:

"No Other Land, No Other Clime On Top of God's Green Earth, Where Land is Free as Church Bells' Chime, Save the Land of Dakota Dirt. Here, For a Year of Honest Toil A Home You May Insure, And From the Black and Loamy Soil a Title In Fee Mature. No Money Needed until the Day When the Earth Itself Provides; Until You Raise a Crop, No Pay:—What Can You Ask Besides?"

Perhaps the future American poet is to come from these breezy plains. Whether it is the prairie air or the prospect of large profits on small investments, I cannot say, but the readiness with which people in Dakota "soar into song" is surprising.

Jamestown has a "boom" on account of the rapid settlement of the wheat-region around it, the building of a railroad northward and the approach of another road from the south. It expects to be the capital of the territory of Northern Dakota, and of the new State, which in another year, if immigration continues to come in as rapidly as the present season, will be ready for admission. The James River, by the way, is a mere creek, hardly big enough to turn the wheel of a small flour-mill in summer. None of the Dakota streams between the Red and the Missouri deserves the name of river, save in the seasons of rains and melting snow. A large portion of the surface-water drains into shallow ponds, which dry up in warm weather.

I have pleasant memories of a Sunday spent in Jamestown: a morning walk over the prairies, treading upon wild crocuses at almost every step, the soil just taking on its first hue of green, elastic under my feet; the strong south wind bringing odors of spring from the far South over a thousand leagues of plain; at service in a handsome little Presbyterian church in the morning; a dignified, earnest man in the pulpit, speaking without manuscript or note, a pretty face at the organ, and a quartette of young men in the choir. No trace of the frontier was here, save a noticeable plainness and carelessness of dress in the congregation. This was more evident in the Methodist church where I went in the evening, and where a minister of rather uncouth and eccentric manner, but of bright, original mind, talked to a churchful of young people. Nor was there trace of the frontier in the comfortable and handsome cottage, where I dined on fresh vegetables and strawberries that must have traveled fifteen hundred miles by rail to reach the table of my host. Indeed, it is one of the pleasant disappointments of far western travel that you never get quite over the verge of civilization, and on its extreme edges are often found the features of its best development. You travel hundreds of miles across vast steppes, seeing nothing but a settler's cabin

at long intervals, and then down into a pretty village, with neat houses, and well-dressed people, who read the eastern papers and magazines, get their carpet and furniture from Chicago, and know what is going on in the great world which seems to you so far off, quite as well as yourself.

The rolling prairies of Northern Dakota have an elevation of nine hundred feet above Lake Superior and of about one thousand five hundred feet above the sea-level. They are absolutely treeless, and the fuel problem would be a serious one to settlers were it not for railroad transportation. A ton of Pennsylvania anthracite is sold at Jamestown for \$13.50, and the soft, crumbling lignite coal, mined west of the Missouri River, is delivered there for about \$5. Stoves have recently been invented to overcome the difficulty of burning lignite,—a matter of longer fire-boxes and closer grate-bars only,—and the fuel which abounds in Western Dakota and Eastern Montana is fast coming into general use. Lumber is brought from the prairies of Northern Minnesota. The lack of timber is the most serious drawback of the whole region. Perhaps the sentiment in favor of tree-planting, growing stronger year by year all through the West, and showing itself in the formation of local societies to encourage forest culture, will in a generation or two change and beautify the bare plains with patches of woodland and rows of trees by roadsides and around farmsteads. Much is being done in this direction from selfish motives, under the stimulus of the law of Congress, which gives one hundred and sixty acres to anybody who will plant ten of them in trees and protect the growth for eight years. Important and beneficial climatic changes will unquestionably be produced by the culture just begun, but we will have to wait half a century for their full effect. The high winds of spring and autumn which sweep over the whole vast interior plain from Manitoba to the Gulf of Mexico will perhaps be abolished, and the terrible blizzard of the north-western winter, which, under the name of the Norther, is almost as much dreaded in Texas, may be robbed of its force and tempered to an ordinary gale.

The Dakota blizzard usually blows for three days from the north, and then shifts about to the south and continues for three more. It drives the dry snow before it with such force that the particles sting the face as though a storm of needles was raging. It is impossible to see any object a dozen rods away. While the storm lasts people shut themselves in their houses, and all business in the towns comes to a stop. The whirling snow filling the air and bombarding the eyes is so blin-

ing and so confusing to the sense of locality that there have been instances of farmers losing their way in attempting to go from their dwellings to their stables, and wandering about on the prairies until they perished. In the course of a winter in Northern Dakota there are usually five or six blizzards. Last winter there was but one, and it did not come until March. The cold season when the blizzard does not blow is, by all accounts, much more agreeable than in the Mississippi Valley or the Atlantic coast region, the dryness of the atmosphere modifying the effects of low temperature to such an extent that there is less discomfort in being out of doors with the mercury at 20° or even 40° below zero, than is felt in the East when it ranges between 10° and 20° above. Wrapped in a big coat of buffalo-skin which reaches to his heels, and with fur mittens and a fur cap, the Dakotan laughs at cold weather, if it is only still; for the blizzard he has respect, and at the first sign of its approach he takes to cover.

West of the James River Valley, and seen from it as a deep blue line upon the horizon, are the Coteaus. The name suggests nothing definite to the mind; consequently it is rare to find anybody even in Eastern Dakota who has any correct notion of what the Coteaus are, unless he has traversed them. The general notion seems to be that the term designates a broken and sterile country. It is a case of giving a dog a bad name. The Coteaus is not the full name of the region. On the larger maps the term is "*Plateau du Coteau du Missouri*." Here we have a meaning and one that is not misleading. The region is a high plateau, about eighty miles broad, which skirts the Missouri River all the way around its great bend for a distance of about four hundred miles. From the James River the ascent to the highest point on the plateau crossed by the railroad is about five hundred feet, and the average elevation of the plateau above the sea-level is about one thousand eight hundred and fifty feet. This elevation is by no means too great for successful agriculture, and the question of the value of a belt of country embracing over thirty thousand square miles will soon become one of importance. I doubt whether there are now five hundred persons living upon the whole of this great territory. The broad band of settlement pushing across Dakota along both sides of the Northern Pacific Railroad has already reached its eastern slope, however, and a few adventurous settlers, discovering that the soil on the Coteaus is just as good as on the rolling prairie below, have opened farms this season, encouraged by the success last year of three "bonanza wheat-farms," the Troy, the Steele,

and the Clark, at each of which nearly two thousand acres are under cultivation.

If the surface of the Red River Valley reminds one of a sea in a dead calm, that of the Coteaus invites the simile of a sea lashed by a storm with gigantic waves, and changed in an instant by a miracle to solid turf-covered earth. Nothing less noble than water swept by strong winds can convey an idea of the myriad different outlines of these billowy hills. Even the foam on the crests of the waves is imitated by the masses of loose bowlders on the crests and summits of the ridges and peaks. On the slopes and in the little valleys the land is all a good brown loam, about eighteen inches deep, resting upon a dry sub-soil. Only the heights are barren, and they are valuable to the settler for the stones caught by them from the glaciers in the great ice period. The whole Coteau belt is destitute of trees and of running streams. All the drainage runs into little ponds in the hollows. Good water is found by sinking wells, however, and many of the ponds do not dry up in summer. For wheat and oats the region is only second in its productive capacity to the Red River Valley, and for stock-raising it is much better, because the animals can find shelter from the blizzards in the valleys. It is much surpassed as a range by the bad lands west of the Missouri and the valleys of Montana, of which I shall speak farther on.

Traveling westward on the railway, you notice toward evening that all the grades tend downward, and about six o'clock you emerge from the Coteaus and see in the distance the broad brown flood of the Missouri, bordered by the usual fringe of cotton-wood trees that marks the course of all large streams in the far West. On a shelf above the bottom-lands sits Bismarck, a blotch of black streets and mean little buildings on the green face of the landscape. Nearer acquaintance with the town does not give a much better impression than is made by the first view from the car-windows. It is called on the circulars of the real-estate agents the "Banner City" and the "Bride of Fortune," but it has little to show the tourist, save the glorious views from its hills. It is a prosperous place, however, decent and orderly as frontier towns go, and can boast of a good hotel, a pretty little Episcopal church, a free reading-room, and a Chamber of Commerce. It may have 2,500 inhabitants, living upon the railroad, the Government, and the trade of the upper Missouri, which employs a dozen steamboats. Only lately has anybody thought of farming, although the place is six years old. In the first stage of the growth of a frontier town, the inhabitants all try to live by speculation,

or whisky-selling, or office-holding, or selling goods at exorbitant prices, or, if by hard work, it must be some kind that has a spice of adventure in it. A man will crawl a mile in the snow with the mercury at 20° below zero to kill a buffalo, but he will not plow a field or dig a cellar. He will drive a mule-team across the plains, in storm and dust, sleep on the ground, and eat hard-tack and jerked buffalo-meat, or he will carry the mail over bleak snow-wastes in the dead of winter, but no wages will tempt him to hoe potatoes. Later comes the period of substantial growth, when the drift-wood of gamblers, liquor-sellers, and desperadoes seeks a farther frontier, and the farmers and mechanics come in. Bismarck is just entering on this second stage of progress. The fertility of the Coteau lands back of it is its best dependence for the future. There are no valley lands proper along the Missouri, save the bottoms, which are subject to overflow. On one side or the other the high, grassy bluffs come close to the water's edge, and opposite, beyond the line of cotton-woods, is always a stretch of from half a mile to two miles of flat, rich bottom, valuable chiefly for the natural hay crop.

Bismarck has a "boomer." He is hired by the Chamber of Commerce, at a good salary, to ride upon the trains east of Fargo and talk to emigrants about the advantages of settling near the Banner City. In a word, he is a drummer for his town. When I was there he had not started upon his mission, and I found him plowing a field for oats on the only farm within sight of the town. He was a member of the Territorial Legislature, he said, and he demonstrated his capacity for the business of booming by fifteen minutes of intelligent conversation on the capacity of the soil of Burleigh County and its attractions to people who by the plow would thrive. He was evidently what they call in Dakota a "rustler." To say that a man is a rustler is the highest indorsement a Dakotan can give. It means that he is pushing, energetic, smart, and successful. The word and its derivatives have many shades of meaning. To rustle around is to bestir one's self in a business way. "What are you going to do in Mandan?" asked one man of another in a Bismarck saloon. "Oh, I'll rustle around and pick up something," which meant that he would look about for a good business opening. "Rustle the things off that table," means clear the table in a hurry. To do a rustling business is to carry on an active trade. The word was coined by the Montana herdsmen to describe the action of cattle brushing the snow from the roots of the bunch-grass with their noses.

The mode of settlement and farming on the

plains of Dakota is by no means the best to promote comfortable living or to develop a high type of character. It is the American system of isolated farm-houses. Drearly isolated, indeed, are the little, bare dwellings that dot the wild prairies and rolling plateaux. Only in the summer season can the farmers move about to see each other or to visit the villages with any pleasure, and then they are too busy with their crops to leave home. The frost in the spring and the fall rains make the roads rivers of black wax, and in the winter there is the danger of the blizzard. How much more agreeable life would be for them if they borrowed the custom of the peasantry of Continental Europe and built their dwellings in groups, forming little hamlets at intervals of three or four miles, each with its church and school! Two obstacles stand in the way of this evident improvement: the habit of American farmers to live upon the tracts they cultivate, and the United States homestead and pre-emption laws, which require actual residence upon the particular quarter-section claimed. Perhaps in course of time, after the Dakota settlers have obtained their titles from the Government, the manifest advantages of coming together in groups of families for social pleasures and for the protection of their homes by barriers of trees against the fierce winds, will lead them to adopt the village mode of life, copying from the Swiss rural communes the system of owning a pasture range and timber tract in common. The farm industry of the region being almost exclusively the raising of wheat, is peculiarly adapted for village farming. The farmer has no need to live in the midst of his grain-field, and as he threshes his crop where he harvests it, and usually hauls the grain to the railroad at once, he requires no barns or granaries. The village could build a granary for the use of all its inhabitants, and thus the wheat could be held to await favorable changes in the market. The care of cattle would be a lighter labor, for a common inclosure would answer for all the stock of the community; or if there were open country for herding, a single herdsman could look after the animals and protect the growing grain.

At Bismarck the Missouri is crossed on a transfer steamer, which does temporary duty in place of the great bridge now building, and ferries the cars over to the new town of Mandan just struggling into existence, and having nothing to boast of as yet save a commodious brick hotel. The Heart River empties into the "Big Muddy" at this point, and up its narrow valley and the narrow valley of its tributaries the Sweet Brier, the Curlew and the Green, one travels for half a day seeing

nothing but the green walls of steep hills and greener floor of the level bottom-land through which the streams creep slowly along, twisting and curving, and often turning back as if loth to reach the end of their courses. The country is absolutely uninhabited save by the section hands and station-masters along the railroad and the laborers at its coal-mines. In the cuttings along the track one can see that the soil in the valley is a good, strong loam, and the grassy hills proclaim for themselves their value for pasturage. In a few years this region, forming a triangle between the Missouri and the Little Missouri, will doubtless be settled by people who will own wheat and vegetable farms in the valleys and cattle-ranges on the hills.

After dinner, in the embryonic town of Dickinson, on Green River—a hotel and three houses—you have time to smoke a cigar or two before the train climbs a sharp grade, runs through a deep cut, and rushes down into the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri. The change in the scene is so startling, and the appearance of the landscape so wholly novel and so singularly grotesque, that you rub your eyes to make sure that you are not dreaming of some ancient geologic epoch, when the rude, unfinished earth was the sport of Titanic forces, or fancying yourself transported to another planet. Enormous masses of conglomerate—red, gray, black, brown, and blue, in towers, pyramids, peaks, ridges, domes, castellated heights—occupy the face of the country. In the spaces between are grassy, lawn-like expanses, dotted with the petrified stumps of huge trees. The finest effect of color is produced by the dark red rock—not rock in fact, but actual terra-cotta, baked by the heat of underlying layers of lignite. At some points the coal is still on fire, and the process of transforming mountains of blue clay into mountains of pottery may be observed from day to day. It has been going on for countless ages, no doubt. To bake one of these colossal masses may have required ten thousand years of smoldering heat. I despair of giving any adequate idea of the fantastic forms of the buttes or of the wonderful effects of color they offer. The pen and brush of a skillful artist would alone be competent for the task. The photographer, be he never so deft with his camera and chemicals, only belittles these marvelous views. He catches only bare outlines, without color, and color is the chief thing in the picture. He cannot get the true effect of distance, and his negatives show only staring blacks and whites in place of the infinite variations of light and shadow effects in valleys and gorges and hollows, and upon crags and pinnacles. Look, if you can, by

the feeble aid of written words upon a single butte, and see how impossible it is to photograph it satisfactorily. It rises from a carpet of green grass. Its base has a bluish hue, and appears to be clay solidified by enormous pressure. It is girdled by bands of light gray stone and black lignite coal. Its upper portion is of the rich red color of old Egyptian pottery. Crumbled fragments strew its sides. Its summit, rising three hundred feet above the plain, has been carved by the elements into turrets, battlements, sharp spires, grotesque gargoyles, and huge projecting buttresses—an amazing jumble of weird architectural effects, that startle the eye with suggestions of intelligent design. Above, the sky is wonderfully clear and blue, the rays of the setting sun spread a rosy tint over the crest, and just above its highest tower floats a little, flame-colored cloud like a banner. When I say there are thousands of these buttes, and that you ride on a fast train for more than an hour in the midst of them, the reader will perceive that the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri is a region of extraordinary interest to the tourist and artist. By another year there will no doubt be a summer hotel in Pyramid Park, as the section lying near the railroad is called. This summer visitors will have to take their own camp equipage. The term Bad Lands does not apply to the quality of the soil. The Indian name was accurately rendered by the early French voyageurs as *Mauvaises Terres pour traverser*—bad lands to cross. The ground between the buttes is fertile, and the whole region is an excellent cattle-range, the rock formations affording the best possible winter protection. Cattle come out of the Bad Lands in the spring as fat as though they had been stall-fed all winter.

Beyond these *Mauvaises Terres* is a stretch of fine prairie country so inviting in its appearance that it seems to say: "Come, plow, sow, and reap these broad, fertile, sunny acres." Toward evening the Yellowstone Valley bursts into view. The train has run two hundred and nineteen miles nearly due west from the Missouri River, and has reached Glendive, an ambitious little town of a year's growth, that has been overmuch boomed. The visitor is disappointed at its size, and, after a night spent in an execrable inn, is apt to go away with a grudge against the place. Nevertheless, Glendive has good prospects. Across the country is all rich, arable prairie, clear through to the Missouri, and the Yellowstone Valley is fertile and virgin soil down to its mouth, and for three hundred and fifty miles above Glendive. At least a hundred miles of the Valley will be tributary to Glendive, besides the prairie regions north and east

of it. Travelers new to frontier life laugh at these droll and dirty congeries of shanties and "shacks," which make a figure as cities upon the railroad maps, forgetting that all the great towns of the older west have gone through the same primary stage of growth. They, too, wallowed in mud and were redolent of bad whisky. The dance-house, gambling-den, and vile variety show, were once the most conspicuous features of Omaha and Kansas City, as they are now of raw Montana settlements.

About three hours is consumed in running from Glendive up the valley to Miles City. Instead of the terra-cotta buttes, the hills that thrust their shoulders into the water on one side or the other of the stream are of streaky clay, and melt under a rain like so many cakes of soap. Nature seems to have formed them in the rough and forgotten to harden them. Back of these mud buttes (everything in the way of hill, rock, mountain, or clay-heap is called a butte in Montana) are immense stretches of grazing country, and in the narrow valley, usually from two to three miles wide, the bottom-lands lie in such excellent form for tillage, that one often forgets that he is in a country redeemed from the Sioux only five years ago, and involuntarily looks for neat farm-houses and church-spires in landscapes so pleasing to the eye and so civilized in appearance, if the word can be applied to a country almost destitute of population. The Yellowstone Valley has been settled, where it is settled at all, from the West, and its lower half has only just begun to attract emigrants.

Miles City was a good trading town before the railroad reached it, and is prospering in a steady way without any booming. It may have 2,000 inhabitants, a large proportion of whom seem to spend their leisure hours in the gaming-saloons, which are open day and night the week through. Saloons and stores also are open on Sunday. There were no church services in the place when I visited it in May, but a church building was almost finished, and there was a hopeful prospect of getting a settled minister from St. Paul. An itinerant had arrived on his way farther west, and services were held one Sunday in a carpenter's shop. In one corner was a pile of six coffins; in another a dog enjoyed a restless sleep on a pile of shavings. The audience, consisting of fifteen persons, sat on boards supported by saw-horses. At the same hour there were probably more than three hundred men congregated in the bar-rooms and gambling-hells.

With all the open and shameless dissipation, good order prevails, as a rule, in Miles City. There are few drunken brawls. A man is

killed now and then, but as a scuffle or a blow means a speedy resort to revolvers, the rudest characters are singularly circumspect in their behavior. I have seen the Texan frontier, and I find the north-western frontier much more orderly. There is as much drinking and gaming, and more vice of another sort, but much less rioting and shooting. In place of the cow-boy we find the buffalo-hunter, who comes into the town in the spring with the spoils of his winter's work, and lives merrily, after his fashion, so long as the money lasts. But, though as rude a barbarian in appearance as any wearing a white skin, he is rarely a boaster or a quarreler. His calling exposes him to great danger and severe hardship. Often he crawls for half an hour in the snow, with the mercury at 30° below zero, to get the wind of a herd and approach near enough to kill. He must have courage, presence of mind, and a sure aim, to escape the charge of a wounded bull. Usually he is grave and reticent. In his hideous, greasy garb he will sit for hours at the gaming-table playing faro or stud-poker, without moving a muscle of his face at either gains or losses.

Around Miles City, in the valleys of the Yellowstone and the Tongue, which there joins the larger stream, successful farming has been carried on for five years, without irrigation. The current notion in the East that the arid belt of Western Texas, Colorado, and Wyoming extends as far north as the Yellowstone is, I am convinced, a mistake. Large crops of wheat, oats, and potatoes are raised year after year at a hundred scattered ranches between Coulson and Miles City, and in the tributary valleys west of Coulson the rainfall is not always sufficient. For over three hundred miles the bottom-lands receive ample moisture for general farming, heavy showers falling as late as the middle of June. Farming in these valleys seems as pleasant and profitable as in any section of the United States. Sixty bushels of oats, thirty of wheat, and two or three hundred of potatoes, are raised to the acre on the smooth, sloping valley lands, and the hill country is all open as a stock-range. At the rate homesteading is progressing this summer, in five or six years the whole Yellowstone country will be well settled with prosperous farmers.

The scenery in the Valley is unique and striking, because of the sharp contrast between the smooth, grassy expanse of the bottoms, fringed on the water's edge with cotton-wood and dotted here and there with clumps of the same timber, resembling old New-England orchards, and the rugged, sav-

age wall of the line of buttes that bounds the horizon. Sometimes there is a mantle of green on the heads of the buttes; often they are bare, and carved by the elements into an infinite variety of shapes. The rock is a sandstone of a gray color, which sometimes varies to sage-green or an indurated clay of a bluish-black hue, frequently banded with broad belts of lignite. The bottom-lands occur now on one side of the river, now on the other, rarely on both, and slope up gently to the cliffs, at the foot of which there are often living springs. The tawny river winds about, spreading out in broad pools or contracting into swift, narrow and angry rapids, very much in the fashion of its bigger brother, the Missouri. It is only navigable for two or three months of the year.

Shacks are the common dwellings of the Valley. A shack is a one-story house built of cotton-wood logs, driven in the ground like piles, or laid one upon another. The roof is of sticks and twigs covered with dirt, and if there is no woman to insist on tidiness the floor will be of pounded earth. Below the shack in social rank is the dug-out—a square cut in a bank, with a dirt roof and a door. In one of these kennels five or six men will frequently house. Above the shack is the shanty, a board dwelling containing one or two rooms. In the whole Valley outside of Glendive, Miles City, and Billings, and half a dozen smaller villages, there is no structure that deserves the name of house. I know of no equal extent of country in the United States so favored by nature in regard to soil and climate where the processes of civilization can be observed in so rudimentary a stage of development. One can see the building of a new State begun at the very bottom—in the mud.

The chief tributaries of the Yellowstone—the Powder, the Tongue, the Rosebud, and the Big Horn—all run through fertile valleys resembling that of the longer stream in their general features, and the whole region favors in a striking degree a combination of the two industries of tillage and herding. Cattle subsist on the dried grasses, without shelter, all winter. Sheep-raising begins to attract attention. The winters are cold and dry, and there is not much snow; the springs are rainy, the summers hot, and the autumns delightful. Some mysterious quality in the air has a champagne effect on the blood and brain. One thinks fast, moves fast, cannot keep still, awakens at four o'clock in the early northern dawn and cannot sleep again, and feels a delightful sense of exhilaration all the time. Do people wear out quick as a compensation for this vigor and elasticity? The Territory has not been

settled long enough for an answer to be given to this question.

One bright, warm day in mid-May, journeying westward with a good team of bays and a stout spring-wagon, we climbed up from the valley to a high plateau near the mouth of the Big Horn River and saw on the southwestern horizon a sight that was welcomed with a spontaneous shout of enthusiastic delight. There were the mountains!—snow-clad mountains, too—a high ridge with bands and patches of white flecking their slopes, and one great dazzling field of snow. They were the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming. Beyond them a sharp pyramid pierced the blue heavens—Clouds Peak, one hundred and fifty miles distant. Below us lay the smiling valley dotted with cosy, log-farm-houses, where we had just passed fields of oats and men planting potatoes in the dark, mellow loam. Yonder the snow-peaks; here the farms. There is then a belt of habitable country fitted for agriculture extending all the way from the fruitful prairies of Dakota to the very base of the outer bulwark of the Rocky Mountain system. No break need exist between the Missouri and the mountains in the chain of settlements now fast being formed link by link. Even the worst of the Bad Lands are excellent for pasturage, and the whole of the Yellowstone Valley is admirably adapted to careful farming on a small or large scale. No irrigation is required as far west at least as the rooth meridian. The old theory still entertained to a considerable extent in Kansas and Nebraska, that farming is unsafe west of the rooth meridian, does not apply to the valleys of the Yellowstone River system. I believe, however, it will be found to hold good as regards the hills and tablelands separating the valleys. The soil in the highlands is good, but the winds and hot June sun dry up the moisture too soon for the crops to mature. The greater part of the surface of Eastern Montana will always be what it is now—a vast pasture; but the buffalo herds which now roam over it will in a few years give place to fat cattle. It is estimated that 250,000 buffaloes were slaughtered in the Yellowstone country last winter.

There is no lack of excitement in travel in Montana, though game is scarce and the Indians are quite harmless, unless they can catch a man alone and off his guard. The difficulties and the adventures of the road keep the mind on the alert. There are no bridges, and the only way to get over sloughs is to pull through. Sometimes a river must be crossed by swimming the horses and putting the wagon upon a crazy skiff. Soon after leaving the railway, which had brought our outfit eighty miles

beyond Miles City, the Yellowstone had to be crossed. The boatmen were stout, daring fellows, but they took no risk on the property they transported. They loaded our wagon upon one skiff and tried to tow it across with another; but the current was running at a tremendous rate in mid-stream, and the heavily laden boat careened and spilled the wagon into the river. Here, it seemed, was a total shipwreck of all our plans for the journey. Nothing but the tongue of the vehicle remained in sight. But now the reserve forces of strength and skill of the two ferrymen came into play. They brought a long rope from their hut, rowed out and attached it to the tongue, and by a herculean tug drew the wagon ashore. Then they fished out seats, blankets, and valises—everything, in fact, but the harness, and that night there was a grand drying-bee in the log-huts of Krutzville. Next morning the horses were driven into the river with blows and shouts, as reluctant to enter the swift, muddy current as any sensible beast might well be. Twice they pulled the boat ashore by their halters. At last they got their knack of swimming, but getting loose from the skiff were carried down toward the rapids, struggling bravely for life, side by side, only their eyes and noses above the water. "They're goners!" shouted the group of frontiersmen on the bank. But suddenly they struck upon a shallow in mid-stream, and soon were caught by the boatmen and towed safe to the northern bank.

The reader who sits in an easy-chair in a snug Eastern home, or perhaps the breezy veranda of some sea-side hotel, turning the pages of his favorite magazine, may think the momentary peril to the lives of two horses a small matter; but if upon those two had rested his hopes for compassing six hundred miles of mountain, plain, and valley, in the heart of the continent, he would have held his breath as we did, when they were battling with the Yellowstone River. For the worry and anxiety of the night and morning, however, there was compensation in the brisk drive up the valley and over the plateaux, the inspiring view of the mountains and the evening's repose in a railroad engineer's cabin on the Crow Indian Reservation. After supper, eaten with a keen appetite, stories of hunting adventures and Indians were told, the buffalo-ropes and blankets were spread on the floor, and before the pine-logs had ceased to blaze in the great stone fire-place all were asleep. An owl kept up a dismal lament all night in a cotton-wood by the cabin-door, and a stray wolf came to the edge of the bluffs and set up a protest against the advance of civilization in a long, melancholy howl.

E. V. Smalley.

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THE NEW NORTH-WEST.

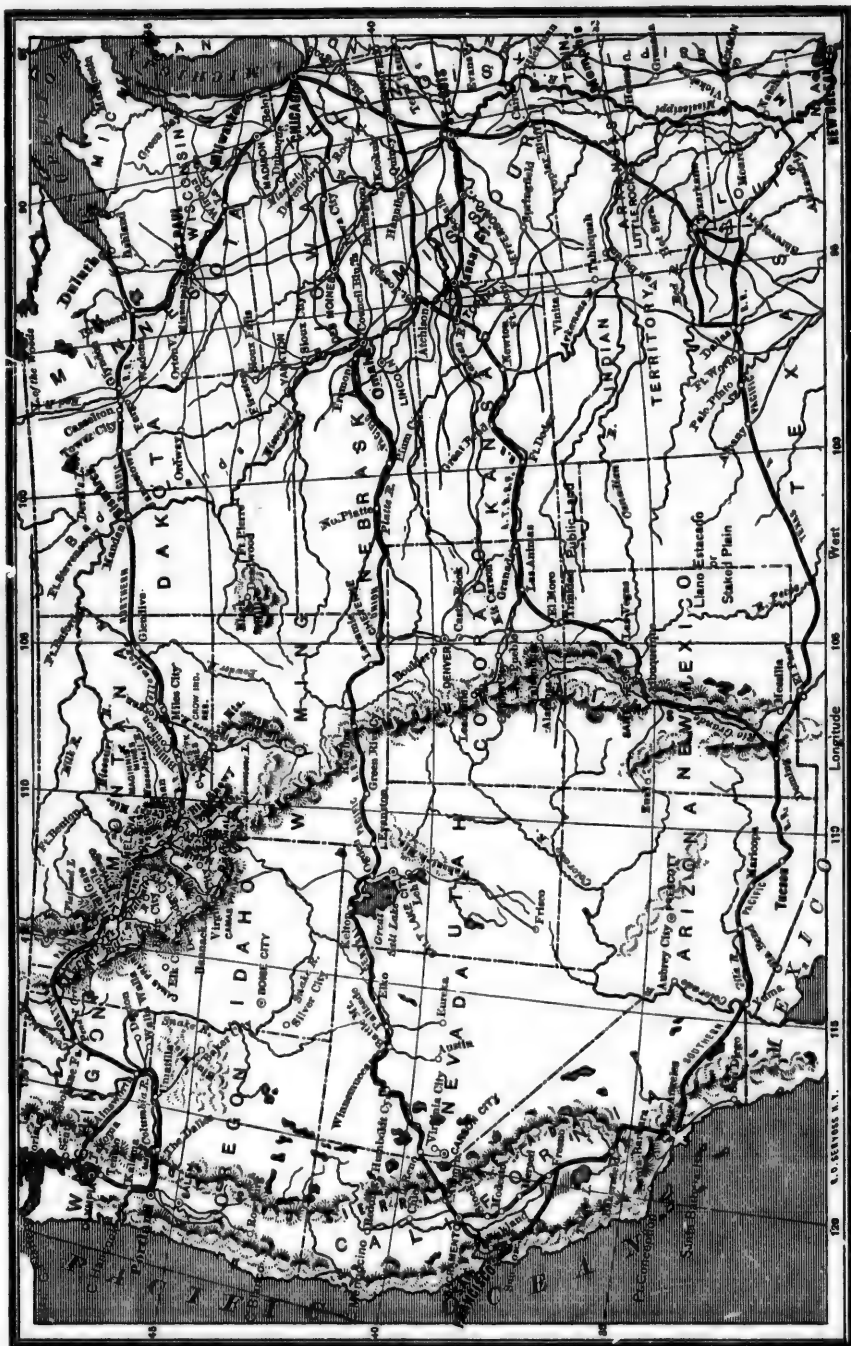
SECOND PAPER: ACROSS THE ROCKIES IN MONTANA.

THE old order of developing new regions in the West is reversed since the railroad era began. Formerly the country was settled first, and the towns grew up to supply the needs of the rural population. Now the towns are created by speculators far in advance of the farming settlement; and by the conveniences they afford for selling crops, and buying implements, lumber, and household supplies, they attract farmers to their vicinity. Each new frontier town is an advertisement of the surrounding country, upon the settlement of which it must depend for its existence. The towns-folk are untiring in their praises of the soil and climate, and if you believe them the next grade of human felicity to living in their raw little village is to live upon a farm in the neighborhood. Whatever happens in the way of disagreeable weather, they assure you it is good for the crops. If it snows in May or hails in June, they come up smiling, and remark blandly that it is just what the crops need. The creation of a new town on a line of railroad pushing its track out into the vacant, treeless spaces of the far West, is an interesting process to observe. A speculator, or a company of speculators, look over the ground carefully fifty or a hundred miles in advance of the temporary terminus of the railroad, and hit upon a site which they think has special advantages, and is far enough away from the last town. They make a treaty with the railroad company for a section of land, agreeing, perhaps, to share the prospective profits on the sale of lots. Then they "scrip" the adjoining sections of Government land, or take it up with desert land claims. A large amount of land scrip is afloat on the market issued in pursuance of Indian treaties, Agricultural College grants, old Military Bounty Land acts, and other peculiar features of our complicated Public Land System. The speculator with his pocket stocked with scrip is able to pick out any choice sections not occupied by homestead or preëemption claimants. Having thus obtained a sufficient body of land to operate with, the founding of the new town is trumpeted in the newspapers, and in all the frontier region for hundreds of miles there is a stir of excitement about the coming city. Billings, on the Yellowstone, is a good example of a town made by this process. A few

months ago it had no existence save in the brains of its inventors. The bare prairie was staked out in streets, avenues, and parks, on a scale for a city of twenty thousand inhabitants. A map was engraved, and within a few weeks after the place got its name, the "Billings boom" began to be talked of as far east as St. Paul. Billings lots were advertised in every town from St. Paul to Miles City, and whole blocks were sold in Chicago and New York. The purchasers, as a rule, knew no more about the valley of the Yellowstone than about that of the Congo, and few of them could have put their finger on a spot upon a map within a hundred miles of Billings. They heard there was a boom, and were eager to take their chances for profit or loss. It was enough for them to hear the place spoken of as the future metropolis of the Yellowstone Valley. Within sixty days from the time when Billings got a local habitation and a name, lots to the value of \$220,000 were sold within its limits, and before thirty days more had elapsed the purchasers had advanced the imaginary value of their holdings from one hundred to three hundred per cent.

Charles Dickens once said that the typical American would hesitate about entering heaven, unless assured that he could go further West. Going West is still a potent phrase to stir the blood of the enterprising and adventurous, and the farther West you go the greater seems to be its power. The men who lead the advance of the army of civilization on the frontier skirmish line do not come from the rear. They are always the scouts and pickets. The people of the six-weeks-old town do not come from the East. As a rule they are from the one-year-old and two-year-old towns a little further back. Most of the men I met in the Yellowstone country were from Eastern Dakota, or the Black Hills region, or from Western Minnesota. When asked why they left homes so recently made in a new country, their reply was invariably that they wanted to get further West.

We came upon Billings one sunny day in May—dropped upon it, I might say; for after a ten miles' drive across a high and windy plateau, the immense dazzling range of the Big Snowy Mountains looming up in front, the ground fell away abruptly and the town





lay at our feet in a broad, green valley. The yellow-pine houses, untouched by paint, glistened in the sunlight like gold. The valley, hemmed in by precipitous cliffs on the north, and by black, bare hills beyond the muddy river on the south, stretched away to the west to distant mountain slopes. Under the shadow of a huge sandstone butte lay the little hamlet of Coulson, now quite out of spirits because of the new town a mile further on. Old Coulson, it is called, though I believe its age is only three years. It has made some money buying buffalo robes of the Crow Indians across the river, and selling shirting, groceries, and whisky to a few herdsmen whose cattle graze in the Musselshell Ranges. Now it must abandon its score of "shacks" and shanties or move them up to Billings. The new town, when I visited it, consisted of perhaps fifty cheap structures scattered over a square mile of bottom-land, but the number may be increased tenfold by the time this article is printed. Many people were living in little A tents or in their canvas-covered wagons, waiting for lumber to arrive with which to build houses. Sixty dollars a thousand was the price of a poor quality of green stuff brought from a mill twenty miles up the Yellowstone. All articles of food, except beef, were frightfully dear. Potatoes were eight cents a pound, flour six dollars a sack. I doubt if one in ten of the inhabitants could tell why he had come. The migrating impulse is the only way to account for the movement of merchants, mechanics, farmers, speculators, gamblers, liquor-sellers, preachers, and doctors to a point nearly one hundred and fifty miles from anything that can be called a town—a point, too, in a region inhabited only by Crow Indians and a few scattered herdsmen. At the signal that a town was to be created, all these people, of divers possessions and ambitions, moved forward and occupied the site as though they were soldiers marching at the word of command. What a wonderful self-organizing thing is society! How did the German baker from St. Paul, the milliner from Minneapolis, the Chinese laundryman from the Pacific slope, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the butcher, the beer-seller, the grocer, and all the other constituent parts of a complete community happen to feel the desire, at the same time, to go with their trades and wares to a remote spot in an unknown land?

Billings expects to be a trading center for the stock country between the Yellowstone and the Missouri, and for the Clark's Fork and Maginnis Mines. It is at the western end of a rich bottom about thirty miles long and from three to seven wide, all of which is

to be turned into farms by an irrigating ditch. Good crops can be raised without irrigation three seasons out of four on land skirting the river, but the productiveness of the soil will be greatly increased, as well as all fear of droughts removed, by tapping the abundant water supply of the Yellowstone. Divided into small farms, and irrigated, the valley above Billings may, in a few years, be as fruitful in grain and vegetables as it is now attractive for its striking and beautiful scenery.

The Upper Yellowstone Valley differs greatly in its character from the lower valley. The bottom on which Billings stands is the last ample stretch of tillable land as you go toward the mountains. Further up there is a succession of smaller bottoms closely hemmed in by the graceful contour of steep hills, whose tops are sparsely covered with pines. Now and then there is a stone butte, but these monotonous sentinels of the lower stream grow more and more rare. The last one I remember as conspicuous for its form stands a few miles above the mouth of Clark's Fork. We named it Ehrenbreitstein from its resemblance to the great fortress on the Rhine. A colony of farmers from near Ripon, Wisconsin, has settled hard by. As one progresses westward, following the course of the river, or striking across the grassy hill country to avoid its bends and bluffs, there are evidences of diminishing rainfall in the beds of streams (already dry in May), and in the dusty soil and the scantier herbage. Only along the great level, in the valley hugging the river do the ranchmen try to raise crops without irrigation. On the cattle ranches in the hills there is no tillage save where a living spring affords a little water for a garden. All the valley land is admirably situated for irrigation; and the Yellowstone, fed by melting snows, has its highest stage in June and July, when its waters are needed by the thirsty soil. What can be done for the thousands of square miles of rich land between the valleys of the streams in all this wild mountain country is a problem which the future must solve. The soil is excellent for grain and vegetables, yet it can be used for nothing but cattle ranges unless artesian wells can be made to supply the lack of rainfall.

For a day's journey west of Billings the magnificent range of the Snowy Mountains keeps the traveler company. They loom up ahead in the clear air as if hardly ten miles away, though the distance to their nearest base is fifty miles. At the time of my journey their tops were thickly shrouded in snow, and on their sides only here and there a streak of rock was to be seen. There are few Alpine prospects that surpass for grand-

eur and beauty the view of this mighty range. From the heights skirting the valley another range can be seen to the southward—the Prior Mountains, a long, black, regular ridge, with a sheet of snow thrown over its top. The second day out from Billings, the Crazy Mountains, an isolated group, also of marked Alpine character, take the place of the Big Snowies on the western horizon. All these peaks and ridges are virgin to foot of man. Some day, perhaps, there will be cozy hotels at their feet; and young men with alpenstocks in hand and with sun-blistered faces, and hob-nailed shoes, will come down from their summits displaying in their hats, not the Edelweiss,—for this shy, fuzzy flower is nowhere found on our continent,—but the wild larkspur, the bluebell and the golden wild-pea blossoms which love lofty and sterile places.

The wild flowers of Montana are as abundant as those of the Alps, and more varied. Choicest of them all, because most delicate and fragrant, is a white, star-shaped, wax-like blossom which grows very close to the ground, and the large golden stamens of which give out an odor like mingled hyacinth and lily of the valley. The people call it the mountain-lily. There is another lily, however, and a real one—yellow with purple stamens—that grows on high slopes in shaded places. The yellow flowering currant abounds on the lower levels, and the streams are often bordered with thickets of wild-rose bushes. Dandelions abound, but do not open in full, rounded perfection. The common blue larkspur, however, is as well developed as in our eastern gardens, and the little yellow violet which in the States haunts the woods and copses is at home in Montana, alike in the moist valleys and upon the bleak dry hill-sides. Small sunflowers are plentiful, the bluebell is equally abundant in valleys and on mountain ridges, and in early June there blooms a unique flower called the shooting star, shaped like a shuttlecock. There are a dozen other pretty flowers, but I could not learn their names—among them a low-growing mass the clumps of which are starred over with delicate white or purple blooms.

It was a surprise to find the Upper Yellowstone Valley already well settled. In the hundred miles before the road to Bozeman leaves the river and climbs the divide of the Belt Mountains one is rarely out of sight of a ranch. The settlers came in from the west during the last two years, anticipating the building of the railroad. They have already done a good deal of fencing with pine saplings, and their little dirt-roofed log "shacks" are snug and warm, if not roomy. A log stable and a corral for stock complete

the array of farm buildings. A little land is cultivated close to the river, and there is unlimited range for stock upon the hills. The people are intelligent and hospitable, but very rude in their ways of living. Some have drifted all the way from California or Oregon, establishing ranches in one valley after another and selling them to go to a farther frontier. They will soon meet the tide of settlement moving up the Yellowstone from the east. There is only a gap of about three hundred miles to be closed; and that is by no means a vacant space, for in it are the little towns of Miles City, Junction City, Huntley, Coulson, and Billings.

A serious obstacle to the thorough settlement of this region is the Crow Indian Reservation, which stretches along the south side of the river for over two hundred miles, and has an average width of about seventy-five miles. Its area cannot be much less than that of Massachusetts, and it probably contains as much land valuable for the uses of man as that State. Upon this magnificent domain live about three thousand Indians. I do not know what the statistics of the Interior Department may be upon which rations and blankets are issued, but settlers living near the reservation place the population, including the "squaw-men" and half-breeds, at from two thousand five hundred to three thousand. A squaw-man, by the way, is a white man who has an Indian wife and lives with a tribe. The Crows make no use of their land save to hunt over it. In winter they cluster around the agency and subsist on Government beef and flour, killing a few buffaloes for their hides, which they sell, and in summer they roam across the country. They own forty thousand ponies. They are rarely seen in the valley of late, having been scared away by stories of smallpox in the camps of the graders on the railroad line. Some of the shrewder chiefs begin to recognize the inevitable, and say that their people must soon learn to farm and give up their hunting grounds. The Crows have long been friends of the whites, but they are a thievish, begging race, and far below their old enemies, the Sioux, in intelligence, handicraft, and fighting qualities. On their buffalo robes they picture their warriors as chasing, killing, and scalping the Sioux, but they rarely fail to seek the protection of the nearest military post when the Sioux hunting ponies come within a hundred miles of them. In the North-western country, the Indians have of late seldom committed any more serious crime than running off stock; but solitary travelers still find it prudent to make a display of a magazine rifle, and to keep a

sharp eye on any roving bands they may encounter. The Indian, whether he be Crow, Blackfoot, Flathead, or Sioux, finds it hard to resist the temptation of a good opportunity to secure a horse and a scalp at the same time.

The Crows lately gave up the western end of their reservation—a strip about forty miles long by sixty wide, containing the recently-discovered Clark's Fork gold and silver mines. This strip fronts on the Yellowstone, and contains some good bottom-land favorably situated for irrigation. The bill ratifying the treaty for the cession was signed by the President on the 12th of April. Weeks before, the north bank of the river was dotted at short intervals with the canvas-covered wagons of squatters from the older-settled valleys of Montana, each of whom had his eye on a section opposite, and was waiting for news of the signing of the bill to cross over and take possession. One morning a courier came over the pass from Bozeman with the word that the bill was signed and the land restored to the public domain. Immediately there was a forward movement all along the forty-mile line. It is said that by seven o'clock that evening there was not a single section of good bottom-land unoccupied. When I passed through the valley, six weeks later, most of the new settlers had their log-cabins already up, and had fenced a great deal of land. The eager enterprise shown in the instant occupancy of the retroceded portion of the Crow Reservation is an evidence that good land which can easily be irrigated is not abundant, and has a special value in the eyes of Montana farmers.

It is probably safe to say that west of the mouth of the Big Horn River the whole of the Yellowstone country, including the main valley and those of the tributary streams, is a region where only by irrigation can farming be successfully carried on, year after year. Narrow strips of land bordering a stream are here and there found moist enough to produce oats and potatoes without irrigating; but no general culture of the region is possible save where water can be brought upon the soil by artificial means. The whole of eastern Montana is a vast grazing region, creased with little winding valleys sunk two or three hundred feet below the general level, in which farming by means of irrigating ditches is very profitable. Not one acre in one thousand, however, can ever be made to produce crops unless a system of artesian wells is found in the future to be practicable. The place of eastern Montana in the industrial economy of the Union is to raise beef and mutton. Her farmers will never do more

than to supply with grain and provisions the herdsmen of the hills and plateaus and the miners of the mountain gulches. With a home market at high prices always ready to take his products, the Montana farmer will always be more favorably situated than the farmer of Iowa, Kansas, and others of the great agricultural States of the West whose crops must go to the distant eastern cities to find consumers.

Near the mouth of Skull Creek, on the Upper Yellowstone, are the remains of an old Crow cemetery. Upon a rude platform about twelve feet above the ground, lie one on another perhaps thirty bodies, wrapped in blankets and buffalo-robos. The bears have torn down a portion of the platform, and the ground is strewn with a horrible débris of bones, skulls, fragments of garments, and dreadful, half-decayed, shapeless masses covered with vermin. Another platform on a high hill near by we did not care to visit, nor did we go down to the cotton-wood grove by the river to get a closer view of the dark objects hanging like gigantic fruit to the limbs. The Crow custom of placing their dead upon platforms, or of suspending them by leather thongs to the branches of trees, no doubt originated in the difficulty of burying bodies with the rude implements of their savage state, at a sufficient depth to protect them from the coyotes, those jackals of the plains. Some religious superstition has probably grown with time around a practice originally purely utilitarian. Hard by the broken platform with its disgusting burden stands the neat little log-cabin of a settler who has fenced in a claim, and counts upon comfort in the near future from his fertile acres and from his herd of cattle on the range among the hills. Two pretty children were playing around the door. The mother was busy with the house-work, and the father stopped chopping wood to show us the peas and beets growing in his garden. Here was a striking contrast between the old and new order of things in the far West. In sight of the moldering corpses of a dying race of savages stood the homestead of the typical American pioneer—a hardy, intelligent man, delighting in the robust toil with which he was winning from the wilds a competency for his later years, and proud of his place as a private soldier in the advancing army of civilization. Is it not better that such men, with their wives and children, should occupy the land, than that a few thousand painted savages should roam over it in search of buffaloeskins and scalps? I do not overlook the humanities of the Indian question, but I see no reason why a handful of people should keep

vast regions from settlement, should be exempt from toil, and clad and fed at the public expense, merely because they have red skins.

We followed the Yellowstone as far as the Great Bend, where to pursue its course further would have taken us southward through narrow defiles and cañons to the National Park. Thence we crossed the Belt Mountains to Bozeman in the Gallatin Valley. The river for the last two days of our journey was a cold-blue, rapid stream abounding in trout, and drawing its waters from springs and the melting snows in the mountains. The scenery became more and more attractive as we advanced, gigantic peaks, covered with snow, rising on either hand, and making, with their white summits and white-streaked sides, and the dark firs belting their lower slopes, a vivid contrast of color with the turf of the uplands, the vivid light green of the young cotton-woods and aspens, and the Rhine-like blue of the river. Among the mountain groups and ranges the most fascinating and the most decidedly Alpine in appearance is the isolated group of the Crazy Mountains lying north of the river. It resembles somewhat the Shreckhorn and Wetterhorn group near Grindelwald in Switzerland. The Crazies send down no glaciers from their towering rocky sides, but the deep masses of snow which fill the depressions between the shoulders of the different peaks might easily be taken for such rivers of ice as push their way into the Swiss valleys. Skirting the base of the Crazies we were met by one of those sudden and severe storms of wind, rain, and hail so common in the Rocky Mountain regions. It swooped down upon us majestically from the Yellowstone Mountains, a snowy range bounding the valley at that point on the south, and it buffeted us for fifteen minutes with mad fury, and then sailed off to the east like a gigantic black bird. While we were struggling in the icy grasp of the tempest, we could see the white crags and pinnacles of the Crazies luminous in vivid sunlight against a sky of perfect azure. The spectacle seemed almost supernatural, so startling and wonderful was its beauty. It was like gazing on the gleaming walls of Paradise from the midst of the storm and darkness of the vexed and toilsome life of earth.

Animal life is not abundant in the Yellowstone Valley. Buffaloes rarely cross the river now, but the whole country is strewn with their skulls and bones, and now and then one comes upon the remains of a bull killed by the Indians during the last winter hunting season. There are antelope back in the hills, and the enormous antlers of the elk, which adorn the gable of every ranchman's cabin, testify to the sport which may be found by

striking back from the valley into the rugged mountain defiles. As to the common black-tail deer, they are still so plentiful that a few hours' tramp of a morning rarely fails to afford the hunter a good shot. The prairie dog still inhabits the whole valley, and you are not long out of sight of a village of these merry, chattering little creatures, who keep tune with their tails to their querulous notes, and provoke you by their impudence to try a shot with your revolver, but always dodge down into their holes in time to escape a bullet.

Large herds of cattle graze in the valleys of the Yellowstone and its tributaries, and in the hill country as far north as the Upper Missouri, wherever there are small streams or water holes. Now that the buffalo is fast disappearing, the region would afford pasturage to at least ten times as many cattle as it supports at present. The stock men who occupy it are generally careful, however, not to let this fact be known, as they naturally would like to keep the whole section for the future increase of their own herds. Cattle-raising in Montana is an exceedingly profitable business. One hears a great deal said in the Territory of the wealth of the "cattle-kings," and how they began their careers a few years ago with on! a few hundred dollars. The local estimate of the annual return from money invested in a herd of cattle is from thirty to fifty per cent. The life of a stockman is not, however, an idle and comfortable one, as often pictured in the newspaper accounts of the business. Unless he is rich enough to hire herdsmen he must look after his herd constantly. He lives, as a rule, in a wretched dirt-roof "shack," and passes most of the time in the saddle, seeing that his animals do not stray too far off the range. In the fierce winter storms he must be out driving the herd into ravines and deep valleys, where they will be protected from the wind. No shelter is built for stock in Montana. The dried bunch-grass furnishes abundant winter grazing, and the animals get through the severe weather with a loss rarely exceeding four per cent. In the spring each owner "rounds up" his herd, and brands the calves. Every ranchman has his own brand, which he registers in the office of the county clerk, and advertises in the nearest local paper, printed, it may be, one or two hundred miles from his range. The annual drive of bullocks across the plains southward to the Union Pacific Railroad, or eastward to the temporary terminus of the Northern Pacific, takes place in the summer months.

Before taking leave of the Yellowstone Valley, along which this article has thus far carried the reader, let me say that the pict-

ures I have tried to draw of its scenery are all from observations made in a journey in the brief spring season of May, 1882, when the grass was green. After June it is a sere and yellow land, the bunch-grass curing upon the ground and giving to all the landscape a sad, autumnal look. It is a treeless region, too, save where the cotton-wood, that Proteus of trees, borders the streams, or the dwarf fir clings to the steep mountain sides, making black patches below the snow-line. The beauty of the valley is not, therefore, the beauty of green and wooded valleys like those of the Hudson, the Connecticut, or the Ohio, but the valley has a beauty of its own,—strange, singular, and often startling by its sharp contrasts between lofty and savage mountain peaks, gigantic walls of rock and gentle slopes and fair, level pastures, basking by the side of swift, limpid streams.

The Belt Mountains are crossed by the road leading from the Upper Yellowstone to the Gallatin Valley, at an elevation of five thousand four hundred feet,—a little less than the height of Mount Washington. The ascent is easy and gradual, but the descent is abrupt through a savage gorge, where the narrow path clings to the side of dizzy abysses. Once out of the gorge, you come suddenly into the wide, fertile, and well-settled plain, watered by the Gallatin and its branches, and passing Fort Ellis, are at Bozeman in an hour. A western fort, by the way, has nothing warlike in its appearance. There are neither walls nor cannon,—nothing, in fact, but a rectangle of frame structures surrounding a parade ground, neat cottages for the officers, long, ugly barracks for the men, store-houses, stables, etc. The soldiers look like laborers in blue blouses, and the officers, when not on duty, dress in easy *négligé* costumes,—blue flannel shirts, loose jackets and trowsers, and felt hats. They are genial, hospitable gentlemen, but are apt to have the failing of the army in Flanders. As story-tellers they are unrivaled, and few men can get as much amusement out of a pack of cards. A pleasant, social life is often found at a post. The older officers have families, and the presence of ladies and children brings to the garrison the refinements of civilized society.

Bozeman, named from the brave Montana pioneer who was killed by Indians on the Yellowstone, has, perhaps, fifteen hundred inhabitants, and, never having been a mining town, wears a settled and respectable air rare in the far West. There are many pretty frame houses with gardens and door-yards, a few substantial brick blocks, two or three churches, a big school-house, and a court-

house with an ambitious tower. Indeed, were it not for the irrigating ditches which run through the place and the lofty snow mountains which bound the horizon on all sides, one might think himself in some Illinois or Iowa county-seat.

Strangers visiting Bozeman are always taken by some public-spirited citizen up to a mount of vision west of the town, from whence the whole broad valley can be seen, with its fields of grain, its swift streams, its irrigating ditches glistening in the sunlight like silver ribbons, its cozy little farm-houses, and its encircling rim of gray mountains crowned with snow. It is a lovely prospect, and doubly impressive because of the hundreds of miles of savage, desolate country one traverses to reach it.

At Bozeman I encountered an interesting specimen of the independent western waiter. Nobody serves willingly in the western territories. The man who brings you a pitcher of water, or harnesses your horse, puts on a familiar swagger, as if to show that he is only doing such menial work temporarily, and considers himself just as good as you. The Bozeman waiter came up to the new guest with a patronizing air and asked if he were hungry. The guest replied that he was. "I'm glad of it," remarked the waiter; "I like a hungry man." The next meal the guest presumed upon his enjoyment of the waiter's acquaintance to ask, "How are the cakes this morning?" but the waiter was out of humor and replied in a surly tone, "Darned if I know, I haint tried 'em."

Our party stopped at a wayside inn one day. There was a hamlet of three or four houses on a creek. The place seemed deserted, but the halting of a team before the log building where refreshments were dispensed rallied the whole population. One man appeared from behind a barn, another from a field, a third from a gulch; in fact they seemed to rise up out of the ground; the prospect of a treat, however remote, where liquor is twenty-five cents a drink, never fails to gather a crowd in this thirsty region. One of the party fell into conversation with a man who proved to be a doctor. A rough fellow, wearing leather riding-breeches and an immense dirt-colored felt hat, took a seat on the bar near by and listened intently to the talk. "I suppose your practice here must be largely eleemosynary," said the traveler to the physician. "Hell! stranger," interrupted the cowboy, "that's a good word. Whar did you git it?"

Apropos of frontier manners is an incident which can be located, as well as anywhere, at Kurtzville, a log town of seventeen saloons,

one store, and one hotel. A New York gentleman got out of the stage-coach and entering one of the saloons, asked politely for a little sherry in a wine-glass. The bar-keeper glared at him for a moment, then reached for a six-shooter and pointing it at the terrified traveler shouted, "Now, I tell you, tenderfoot, you take whisky. You take it in a tin-cup and you like it." The stranger took the whisky in the tin-cup, asserted that it was the best he ever drank, and made haste to get back to the coach.

The valleys of the three rivers which form the Missouri, the Gallatin, the Madison, and the Jefferson, seen from the hill east of Bozeman form the best developed agricultural region of Montana, and I think the only section of the Territory where broad areas of land can be seen under cultivation. Elsewhere the farms are narrow strips skirting the banks of streams. Not that the good land all lies in belts close to the creeks and rivers, but thus far farming has only been attempted where water could be brought upon the fields without much labor or expense. The time will soon come when a system of scientific irrigation requiring considerable capital for constructing long main ditches will be introduced, as has already been done in Colorado. Hundreds of thousands of fertile acres lie idle which can easily be reclaimed and made to produce large crops by utilizing the water now running to waste. Montana agriculture thus far is rudimentary and superficial. Men took to it as a business, because the isolation of the Territory and the demands of the mining camps for food and forage opened home markets at exceedingly high prices. When land could be had for the taking, and by a cheap and simple method of irrigation be made to produce sixty bushels of oats, fifty of wheat or three hundred of potatoes to the acre, farming was more profitable than gold mining. The old ranchmen would like to see this state of things continue. They are angry at the railroads pushing into the Territory from east, west, and south, foreseeing that the old era of high prices, free and easy living, vigilance committees and revolver law is doomed, and that they must soon conform to the general conditions of life prevailing in the densely settled portions of the country. One of the results of the construction of railroads through Montana will be to increase the price of land and diminish the value of crops,—a seeming paradox explained by the fact that hitherto no reasonable ratio has existed between the two. A man's farm has hardly been salable for the amount realized from its annual product. For example, a young man, owning one of the best ranches in the Galla-

tin valley, recently married in the East; and as his wife did not like Montana—no woman does until she has lived a long time in the Territory—he sold his ranch for \$2500. A few days after he signed the deed, one of the Bozeman merchants paid him \$3500 for the crop of oats he had just harvested.

Farming by irrigation is more laborious and expensive than the ordinary method, but it yields much larger returns. A Montana farmer would think he had unusually bad luck if a field of fifty acres did not average sixty bushels of oats to the acre year after year. The water brought upon the land is believed to have fertilizing properties, although it is usually as clear as spring water. A field farmed by irrigation must be so situated that water can be brought along one side of it in a main ditch, and must have sufficient slope for cross ditches to be run with a plow from twelve to twenty feet apart. If the season is very dry, water must be brought upon the whole field three times; in an ordinary season once or twice is often enough. The ground must be thoroughly moistened plowshare deep. The farmer goes along the ditches with a spade, making little dams to spread the water, and thus patch by patch he gets the whole surface drenched at last.

From Bozeman to Helena is about one hundred miles, and the sparsely settled condition of Montana will be understood when I say, that in the region settled seventeen years ago, with the exception of one little mining village of perhaps two hundred inhabitants, nothing which can possibly be called a town is seen in the whole journey. A little belt of farming settlement follows the banks of the Missouri for twenty miles below the junction of the three rivers, and a few creeks coming down from the mountain sides are dotted with ranches. The lines of black alders fringing these creeks can be seen ten miles away,—narrow, bright-green ribbons laid across the gray, bunch-grass slopes from the gorges in the foot-hills down to the deep valley of the river. There are striking views of the Belt Mountains on the east and the main range of the Rockies on the west to be had from the high divides between the creeks, and at one point the Missouri can be seen for many miles,—a clear, winding stream embracing countless little green islands. The country is covered with a sparse growth of bunch-grass growing in stands of about a dozen stacks with bare spaces as large as a dinner-plate between. The grass gives color to the valleys, slopes, and hills; but nowhere is it thick enough to look like an eastern pasture. Herds of horses and cattle are seen here and there. They look fat and contented, but to

thrive upon the scant grass they require a wide range. As much as ten acres of grazing ground for each animal is the ranchman's usual estimate.

Helena is a town of six thousand inhabitants, wedged in a cleft between base hills and debouching upon the plain as best it can among enormous piles of stones and dirt,—the débris of extensive placer mines. Scarcely have the miners spared room enough for the road to get into the town among their hideous heaps and holes. An unclean business this placer mining, carried on in mud and dirty water and leaving ghastly gashes and scars on the face of the country. The town is the outgrowth of a prosperous mining camp,—the Last Chance gulch, from which it is said more gold has been taken than from any other single locality in the world. Its situation as the nearest point in the mining region to the head of navigation on the Missouri River at Fort Benton made Helena a distributing center in the days when merchants brought in a year's supply of goods during the brief season of navigation. Thus it got a start as the chief commercial town of the territory. It still keeps the lead, and will continue to keep it unless the railroads should develop a larger town in the Yellowstone Valley. Ugly to the eye, with its scrambling, shadeless streets clinging to the steep hills; its narrow, crooked, ill-built business thoroughfare, and its blotch of a Chinese suburb, Helena is, nevertheless, an attractive place. The traveler can enjoy his ease in a comfortable hotel, read the news morning and evening in intelligent, well-printed daily papers, take his choice of seven churches on Sunday, read the new publications in a public library, supply his needs at stores as large and as well-stocked as are found in cities ten times as large in the east, and enjoy the society of people who add to culture that stamp of originality of character so common in the far West, and so rare in old communities. The town is singularly self-centered. Small as it is, it has metropolitan airs. It does its own thinking without reference to Chicago or New York, and has its own code of morals, which includes the toleration of public gaming-houses on the most eligible corners of the main street. People speak of "the States," as of some far-distant country in whose affairs they take but slight interest. The height of human felicity, in their opinion, is to live in Montana and "strike it rich" on a quartz lead. The highest title to distinction is to be an old resident. The red-faced miner or ranchman in a big clay-colored sombrero, who brings down his fist upon the bar and says, "I am an old Montanian," feels as genuine a pride as did

the Roman citizen of old when he boasted of a share in the empire of the world. To have come into the territory in 1862 is an honor here as great as a lord's title in England. The cordial hospitality shown to strangers by the better class of residents of the Montana towns is a pleasant surprise. Acquaintances are easily made; and the traveler who lately was glad of a chance to unroll his blankets at night on the floor of a ranchman's cabin finds himself entertained at bountiful tables, and surrounded by the accessories of a tasteful and comfortable home life. It is a thousand miles across vast, desolate spaces to the nearest city; but here are pictures, books, pianos, and luxurious furniture. The only noticeable difference in the talk of social circles observed by one fresh from the east, is that the current news and political discussion of "the States" are of slight interest here, and are rarely mentioned, and that local affairs, including the heroic days of the Vigilance Committee, are much dwelt upon. You will very likely learn that the prominent lawyer or banker who sits next you at dinner, was a leading vigilante and helped hang a dozen robbers and murderers. The papers give but a meager telegraphic summary of events in the world outside Montana, and the St. Paul and Chicago papers are so old when they reach here that they have few readers. Hemmed in by mountains and separated from the well-settled portions of the west by wide areas of vacant country, Montana has thus far been a region apart, and has worked out her own destiny without much help from beyond. Soon the territory will be traversed from east to west by eight hundred miles of railway. Population will pour in and the little mountain community, grown to the dimensions of a State, will assimilate with the nation at large.

We crossed the main divide of the Rockies at Frenchwoman's Pass, about fifteen miles north-west of Helena. The pass gets its name from a woman who was murdered by her husband in the early days of Montana settlement, and over it runs the main road between Helena and the Upper Missouri country, and the valleys watered by the tributaries of the Columbia. We went up the pass in fine style,—four handsome horses and the best driver in Montana, "Gib," a graduate of the Overland Mail service, a powerful man with bronzed face and the neck and shoulders of a Spanish bull-fighter, but with a soft voice, and an admirable dignity and quietness of manner. He talked to his horses in low tones, never a loud word or an oath, chiding or encouraging them as they deserved, and they seemed perfectly to understand every word he said. When we came to narrow places in

the road, overhanging precipices, where two teams could not pass, his voice rang out like a bugle in a high, piercing cry to warn teamsters who might be out of sight around a corner, not to advance further. Less musical, perhaps, than the modulated shout with which the Venetian gondolier turns a corner, the cry of the Rocky Mountain driver, flung back from lofty peak or cañon wall, is nevertheless much more thrilling. Gib's leaders were adorned with a great number of ivory rings attached to the martingales,—the private property of the driver and a badge of distinction on the road. All the farmers' "whips" ornament their leaders in this fashion,—the greater the driver the more ivory rings on the martingales. The teamsters gave way to the great man as we passed, and even the stages yielded half the road,—a courtesy accorded to no ordinary outfit,—and the drivers hailed Gib in tones of respectful comradeship.

The ascent of the eastern slope of Frenchwoman's Pass is not at all difficult. A fair road climbs up through a forest of firs between masses of rock and over brawling torrents. Through rifts in the forest there are here and there views of the broad Prickly Pear Valley and the Belt Range beyond, and of nearer rounded summits of the Rockies,—huge hemispheres of granite and snow. At the top of the pass is a broad green meadow-like expanse, flecked with patches of snow all summer, and rimmed around with the dark firs. Upon the very ridge-pole of the water-shed, where a melting snow-bank divided its favors between two tiny rivulets, one running to the Atlantic and the other to the Pacific, we halted and opened a bottle of Beaujolais, presented to one of the party weeks before by a fellow traveler at the foot of Gray's Peak in Colorado.

Flowers grew in abundance among the snow-banks—adder's-tongues, bluebells, yellow violets, wind-flowers, and half a dozen other species. The road from the summit wound down over green slopes, and through woodland patches, following the course of the Little Blackfoot Creek for two hours; then across windy ridges until the deep, broad valley of the Deer Lodge River burst into sight. A great difference was observed between the vegetation on the two sides of the Main Divide. The Pacific Slope shows a much richer flora; the grass is better and more abundant; many shrubs and flowers flourish that are not seen east of the range; the forests of fir and pine descend farther into the valleys; streams are more frequent, and have a greater volume of water. Evidently the warm, moist currents of air from the Pacific Ocean striking against the Rockies leave

much of their moisture before they reach the valleys of the eastern slope.

In thirty miles' drive from the pass to Deer Lodge the only signs of settlement we saw were four log-houses, a saw-mill, and a flock of sheep. Plenty of room here for people who want to lead a pastoral life on sunny green slopes near mighty forests, by swift, clear streams, with snow peaks cutting the blue sky and nature furnishing whole acres of dwarf sunflowers and larkspur for flower-gardens. Not so far from the good things of civilization, either; for what is that ten miles away in the valley? Church spires, surely, and pretty white houses in a mass of green. Yes, it is the village of Deer Lodge, prettiest of the Montana towns. Near acquaintance does not lessen its beauty. Its twelve hundred inhabitants support excellent schools in buildings that would do no discredit to a New England town. They live in neat houses, and have gardens and lawns watered by clear, full streams, and boast of the best weekly newspaper in the territory. Their valley lies about four thousand feet above the sea level, and is rather cold for agriculture; but good crops of wheat, oats, barley, and potatoes are produced. Montana potatoes, by the way, are of prodigious size and of corresponding excellence. Until you have eaten them you do not know what the potato is capable of.

From Deer Lodge my route led westward fifty miles over high grassy hills, past placer mining camps where the face of the country for miles has been gashed and scarred—all of the soil washed away in the eager search for grains and nuggets of gold, and nothing left but sand and heaps of boulders. Hideous little villages squat on the brink of these excavations, or sprawl out, hot and dusty, in the bottoms of the gulches, populated chiefly by saloon-keepers and Chinamen. In the single street of one of these villages, where we stopped for dinner, lay a big rock, an obstruction to teams of fifteen years' date, no doubt. The loungers at the store got into a dispute about its probable weight; bets were quickly made; crowbars and a truck were brought, and with a deal of sweating and swearing, prying and lifting, the rock was put upon a scale and weighed. The losers paid their bets, business at the saloons became brisk for a time, and the excitement promised to last the dull town for the rest of the summer.

The country both sides of the Deer Lodge River is all good pasture land, save where gashed by the gold grubbers for a day's journey west. Then the stream takes another name, and is called the Hell Gate, and runs for another fifty miles through a magnificent mountain gorge, the narrow valley and the

steep declivities being heavily timbered with the red fir and the Rocky Mountain pine (*Pinus ponderosa*). If the reader has seen the valley of the French Broad River in North Carolina, below Asheville, he will have a tolerably correct idea of the Hell Gate defile, save that the Montana forest has no hardwood trees, and the somber evergreen hue is only relieved, close to the stream, by the light tint of the pinking aspens. It was a delight to get into the woods after a month of travel across the treeless country of Dakota and Eastern Montana. We passed a caravan of Mormons, who had come five hundred miles from Utah with wagons and wives to work on the railroad. We met bands of Flat-head Indians bound for Camas Prairie to gather and dry the camas root: picturesque at a distance in their motley garb of blankets and skins, but dirty and ugly on near acquaintance. All were mounted, even to babies of three years old, who guided their ponies—by rope

halters tied around the lower jaw—with as much skill as the old bucks and squaws. The squaws looked after the spare ponies, of which there was always a numerous drove, and the patient nags that trotted along, dragging the tepee poles, while the braves rode ahead, silent, disdainful, and hideous in red paint and long, braided hair.

Out of the Hell Gate defile we emerged one evening in early June, to rest in the frontier village of Missoula, which thrives on the trade of the Bitter Root Valley—best of the farming valleys of West Montana—on the necessities and vices of a military post, and on what lawful or unlawful business can be done with the dwellers on the Jocko Indian Reservation twenty-five miles distant. Here the river takes a third name, and, after it receives the Bitter Root, is styled the Missoula, and runs with wide and hurrying current westward to join the Clark's Fork of the Columbia.

E. V. Smalley.

(To be continued.)

UNQUENCHED.*

I THINK upon the conquering Greek who ran
(Brave was the racer!) that brave race of old—
Swifter than hope his feet that did not tire.

Calmer than love the hand which reached that goal;
A torch it bore, and cherished to the end
And rescued from the winds the sacred fire.

O life the race! O heart the race! Hush!
And listen long enough to learn of him
Who sleeps beneath the dust with his desire.

Go! shame thy coward weariness, and wail.
Who doubles contest, doubles victory.
Go! learn to run the race, and carry fire.

O Friend! The lip is brave, the heart is weak.
Stay near. The runner faints—the torch falls pale.
Save me the flame that mounteth ever higher!

Grows it so dark? I lift mine eyes to *thine*;
Blazing within them, steadfast, pure, and strong,
Against the wind there fights the eternal fire.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

* At the Promethean and other festivals, young men ran with torches or lamps lighted from the sacrificial altar. "In this contest, only he was victorious whose lamp remained unextinguished in the race."

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Ed 87

THE NEW NORTH-WEST.*

THIRD PAPER: FROM THE ROCKIES TO THE CASCADE RANGE.

I TAKE up the thread of the narrative of north-western travel, which the reader may have followed in previous numbers of this magazine, at Missoula, a little trading town of perhaps eight hundred inhabitants, prettily situated on a plateau facing Hell Gate River, a few miles above its junction with the Bitter Root. South of Missoula, within rifle-shot, is the entrance to the great Hell Gate Cañon; westward across the angle formed by the two rivers rises the huge, dark wall of the Bitter Root Mountains, higher here, and more picturesque, than the main range of the Rockies, which are half concealed by the grassy swells of the foot-hills on the east. Lo-Lo Peak, the loftiest and most individual mountain of the Bitter Root chain, is covered with snow all summer; its altitude must be about ten thousand feet. North-west of the town the valley is broad enough for cultivation for a distance of twenty miles, when it closes in at the cañon of the Missoula River. A range for which there is not even a local name rims the valley on the north. One summit, called Skotah Peak, is a perfect pyramid in form. This cloud-compassed landmark we shall not lose sight of in three days' travel.

Up the Bitter Root Valley there are farms scattered for sixty miles. The valley is warmer than any other in Western Montana, and the small fruits and some hardy varieties of apples are grown. Herds of horses and cattle feed on the slopes of the mountains. Grain and potatoes are grown by irrigation, and the valley is a source of food-supply for military posts and mining-camps. Hogs are fattened upon peas and wheat, and the flavor of a Bitter Root ham is something altogether unique and appetizing. In June the bitter-root plant, from which the valley gets its name, covers all the uncultivated ground with its delicate rose-colored stars. The blossom, about as large as a wild rose, lies close upon the earth. The long, pipestem-like root is greatly relished by the Indians for food. When dried it looks like macaroni, and it is by no means unpalatable when cooked with a little salt or butter, or eaten raw. The squaws dig it with long sticks, and dry it for winter food. Another root, also a staple in the aboriginal larder, is the camas, which loves moist prairies,

where it flaunts its blue flowers in the early summer. In June, when the camas is ready to gather, even the most civilized Indian on the Flathead reservation feels the nomadic impulse too strong to resist. He packs his lodge upon ponies, and starts with his family for some camas prairie, where he is sure to meet a numerous company bent on having a good time.

The picturesque features of life in a Western Montana town like Missoula are best seen as evening approaches. Crowds of roughly clad men gather around the doors of the drinking-saloons. A group of Indians, who have been squatting on the sidewalk for two hours playing some mysterious game of cards of their own invention, breaks up. One of the squaws throws the cards into the street, which is already decorated from end to end with similar relics of other games. Another swings a baby upon her back, ties a shawl around it and herself, secures the child with a strap buckled across her chest, and strides off, her moccasined . . . toeing inward in the traditional Indian fashion. She wears a gown made of a scarlet calico bed-quilt, with leggings of some blue stuff; but she has somehow managed to get a civilized dress for the child. They all go off to their camp on the hill near by. Some blue-coated soldiers from the neighboring military post, remembering the roll-call at sunset, swing themselves upon their horses and go galloping off, a little the worse for the bad whisky they have been drinking in the saloons. A miner in blue woolen shirt and brown canvas trousers, with a hat of astonishing dimensions and a beard of a year's growth, trots up the street on a mule, and, with droll oaths and shuffling talk, offers the animal for sale to the crowd of loungers on the hotel piazza. No one wants to buy, and, after provoking a deal of laughter, the miner gives his ultimatum: "I'll hitch the critter to one of them piazzer posts, and if he don't pull it down you may have him." This generous offer is declined by the landlord; and the miner rides off, declaring that he has not a solitary four-bit piece to pay for his supper, and is bound to sell the mule to somebody.

Toward nightfall the whole male population seems to be in the street, save the busy Chinamen in the laundries, who keep on

* See Map on page 770, September CENTURY.

sprinkling clothes by blowing water out of their mouths. Early or late, you will find these industrious little yellow men at work. One shuffles back and forth from the hydrant, carrying water for the morning wash in old coal-oil cans hung to a stick balanced across his shoulders. More Indians now—a "buck" and two squaws, leading ponies heavily laden with tent, clothes, and buffalo robes. A rope tied around a pony's lower jaw is the ordinary halter and bridle of the Indians. These people want to buy some article at the saddler's shop. They do not go in, but stare through the windows for five minutes. The saddler, knowing the Indian way of dealing, pays no attention to them. After a while they all sit down on the ground in front of the shop. Perhaps a quarrier of an hour passes before the saddler asks what they want. If he had noticed them at first, they would have gone away without buying.

Now the great event of the day is at hand. The cracking of a whip and a rattle of wheels are heard up the street: the stage is coming. Thirty-six hours ago it left the terminus of the railroad one hundred and fifty miles away. It is the connecting link between the little isolated mountain community and the outside world. No handsome Concord coach appears, but only a clumsy "jerky" covered with dust. The "jerky" is a sort of cross between a coach proper and a common wagon. As an instrument of torture this hideous vehicle has no equal in modern times. The passengers emerge from its cavernous interior looking more dead than alive. A hundred able-bodied men, not one of them with a respectable coat or a tolerable hat, save two flashy gamblers, look on at the unloading of the luggage. The stage goes off to a stable, and the crowd disperses, to rally again, largely reinforced, at the word that there is to be a horse-race.

Now the drinking saloons—each one of which runs a faro bank and a table for "stud poker"—are lighted up, and the gaming and guzzling begin. Every third building on the principal business street is a saloon. The gambling goes on until daylight without any effort at concealment. In all the Montana towns keeping gaming-tables is treated as a perfectly legitimate business. Indeed, it is licensed by the Territorial laws. Some of the saloons have music, but this is a rather superfluous attraction. In one a woman sings popular ballads in a cracked voice, to the accompaniment of a banjo. Women of a certain sort mingle with the men and try their luck at the tables. Good order usually prevails, less probably from respect for law than from a prudent recognition of the fact that every

man carries a pistol in his hip-pocket, and a quarrel means shooting. The games played are faro and "stud poker," the latter being the favorite. It is a game in which "bluff" goes farther than luck or skill. Few whisky saloons in Montana are without a rude pine table covered with an old blanket, which, with a pack of cards, is all the outfit required for this diversion.

The main street of the frontier town, given up at night to drinking and gambling, by no means typifies the whole life of the place. The current of business and society, on the surface of which surges a deal of mud and drift-wood, is steady and decent. There are churches and schools and a wholesome family life.

From Missoula my route led northward over a range of mountains through the Coriican defile, and across a forest of fir, pines, and tamaracks, down into the valley of the Jocko River, where the agency of the Flathead Indians is established. These are the Indians with whom General Garfield made a treaty in 1872. A portion of them lived in the Bitter Root Valley, and the negotiations conducted by Garfield were to induce them to remove to the reservation. Most of the chiefs signed the treaty, under the persuasive influence of a promise of five thousand dollars a year for ten years; but Charlo, the head chief, refused. He, with about three hundred followers, still lives on the Bitter Root, subject to no agency and receiving no annuity or other form of government gratuity. These Indians have farms and stock-ranges which they hold separately, not by any legal title, but by agreement among themselves.

The Flathead reservation contains about 1,500,000 acres of land, and is inhabited by less than twelve hundred Indians and half-breeds, belonging to the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, Nez-Perce, and Kootenay tribes. I traversed it for its entire length of sixty miles along the Jocko and Pend d'Oreille rivers. Allowing only four persons to a family the area of the reservation amounts to five thousand acres for each family living upon it, a pretty liberal allowance when it is remembered that a white family can get only one hundred and sixty acres from the Government. Much of the reservation is mountain land of no value save for the timber on it, but there is ten times as much fine valley and grazing land as the Indians can make any use of. As a rule the Indian reservations take the best part of the Western country. They are absurdly large. Nearly half of Montana is Indian territory to-day. Five or six thousand Blackfeet, Gros Ventres and Piegiens hold a country north of the Missouri River as large as the State of Pennsylvania; two thousand Crows occupy a region south of the Yellow-

stone equal in area to the State of Massachusetts, and twelve hundred Flatheads, and people of allied tribes, possess more square miles than are embraced in the State of Connecticut.

The Flathead agency is under the control of the Catholic Church, which supports a Jesuit mission upon it and has converted all of the inhabitants to at least a nominal adhesion to its faith. At the mission are excellent schools for girls and boys, a church, a convent, and a printing-office which has turned out, among other works, a very creditable dictionary of the Kalispel or Flathead language. The agent, Major Ronan, has been in office over five years, and with the aid of the Jesuit fathers has been remarkably successful in educating the Indians up to the point of living in log houses, fencing fields, cultivating little patches of grain and potatoes, and keeping cattle and horses. The Government supplies plows and wagons, and runs a saw-mill, grist-mill, blacksmith shop and threshing machine for their free use. There is no regular issue of food or clothing, but the old and the sick receive blankets, sugar, and flour. Probably nine-tenths of these Indians are self-sustaining. Some persist in leading a vagabond life, wandering about the country; but these manage to pick up a living by hunting, fishing, and digging roots, and sell ponies enough to buy blankets, tobacco, and powder. But even the best civilized, who own comfortable little houses with plank floors and porcelain door-knobs got from the Government, like to keep their canvas lodges pitched, and prefer to sleep in them in summer time. Farming is limited to a few acres for each family, but herding is carried on rather extensively. Thousands of sleek cattle and fine horses feed upon the bunch pastures along the Jocko and the Pend d'Oreille, on the Big Camas Prairie and by the shores of Flathead Lake. Many years ago, at a social gathering in Washington, the late President Garfield, then in the early part of his career in Congress, delivered a little extemporaneous address on the Indian question, in which he argued that the first step from barbarism toward civilization for all wild people was the pastoral life, and said that the Indian should be taught to rear cattle before being told to cultivate the soil. It was afterward a source of much satisfaction to him to learn that the tribe he visited in 1872 had become excellent herdsmen, and had already begun farming operations.

Probably there is no better example of a tribe being brought out of savagery in one generation than is afforded by the Flatheads,

and their cousins, the Pend d'Oreilles. Much of the credit for this achievement is no doubt due the Jesuit fathers, who, like all the Catholic religious orders, show a faculty for gaining an ascendancy over the minds of savages, partly by winning their confidence by devoting themselves to their interests, and partly, it may be, by offering them a religion that appeals strongly to the senses and superstitions. These Indians boast that their tribe never killed a white man. They are an inoffensive, child-like people, and are easily kept in order by the agent, aided by a few native policemen. Life and property are as secure among them as in most civilized communities. With them the agency system amounts only to a paternal supervision providing implements and machinery for husbandry, and giving aid only when urgently needed. It does not, as upon many reservations, undertake the support of the tribe by issuing rations and clothing. Instead of surrounding the agency with a horde of lazy beggars, it distributes the Indians over the reservation and encourages them to labor. It ought to result in citizenship and separate ownership of the land for the Indians. Many of them would now like deeds to the farms they occupy, but they cannot get them without legislation from Congress changing the present Indian policy. Practically they control their farms and herds as individual property; but they have no sense of secure ownership and no legal rights as against their agent or the chief. Some of them complain of the tyranny of the native police and of the practice of cruelly whipping women when accused by their husbands of a breach of marriage vows,—a practice established, it is charged, by the Jesuits; but in the main they seem to be contented and fairly prosperous. Among them are many half-breeds, who trace their ancestry on one side to Hudson's Bay Company servants or French Canadians,—fine-looking men and handsome women these, as a rule. They are proud of the white blood in their veins, and appear to be respected in the tribe on account of it; or perhaps it is their superior intelligence which gains for them the influence they evidently enjoy. Shiftless white men, drifting about the country, frequently attempt to settle in the reservation and get a footing there by marrying squaws; but they are not allowed to remain. The Indians do not object to their company so much as the agent.

The Kootenays (was the name originally *Court-nes* ?), of whom there are a few lodges on the Flathead reservation, have strayed over the line from the British territory. They

do not take to the civilizing processes in force around them, and are great vagabonds and beggars, frequently wandering off with their dogs, ponies, squaws, and lodges to camp near some town and subsist on what they can pick up. They are as eloquent in begging as Italian lazzaroni. One of them expressed his feelings to the agent's wife the other day by saying plaintively: "My throat is thirsty for sugar, and my heart is hungry for fifty cents."

The Jocko Valley is one of the prettiest of the minor valleys of the Rocky Mountain system. It was all a green, flowery meadow when I traversed it in the month of June. Its width is about ten miles and its length perhaps thirty. Low, wooded mountain ranges surround it. That on the east is broken by the main branch of the stream, and through the rift can be seen the main chain of the Rockies—a mighty mass of crags and cliffs and snow-fields thrust up among the clouds. For thirty miles after the Jocko joins the Clark's Fork of the Columbia, called by most people in this region the Pend d'Oreille River, the main river is bordered by narrow green bottoms and broad stretches of grassy uplands rising to the steeper inclines of fir-clad mountains. Herds of horses are occasionally seen, and now and then the log hut of some thrifty Indian or half-breed, or the canvas lodge of a family that prefers the discomforts and freedom of savage life to the comforts and restraints of a local habitation. The first night out from the agency was spent at the hut of one of the queer characters that hang about Indian reservations,—a shiftless white man, who pays for the privilege of ferrying travelers across the river by taking the Indians over free. He lives in a dirty one-room hut. In response to a suggestion about supper, he declared that he would not cook for the Apostle Paul himself, but added that we were welcome to use his stove, and could take anything eatable to be found on the premises. His bill next morning was seven dollars—one dollar, he explained, for victuals for the party, and six for ferriage. A wagon-box offered a more inviting place for a bed that night than the floor of the ferryman's cabin. In the evening, after the old man had put a party of strolling Flatheads across the river, grumbling all the while because they paid no toll, he sat on a log, and, encouraged by the gift of a cigar and a cup of whisky, told of his adventures in the Far North-west when he was a Hudson's Bay Company's man, and had a squaw wife in every tribe he visited.

Another day's travel brought us out of the Flathead Reservation, and at the same time to the end of the wagon road and of the open country. The road did not, like one of those

western highways described by Longfellow, end in a squirrel track and run up a tree, but it stopped short at a saw-mill on the river's edge, where a hundred men were at work cutting logs and sawing bridge timber for the railroad advancing up the gorge eighty miles below.

In that day's journey we passed the Big Camas Prairie—not the one Chief Joseph fought for; that lies far to the west, in Idaho, across the Bitter Root Mountains. There are many camas prairies, big and little, in Montana and Idaho, and they all resemble each other in being fertile green basins among the mountains, in whose moist soil the camas plant flourishes. This was, perhaps, fifteen miles broad by twenty-five long—all magnificent grazing land. We passed an Indian village of a dozen lodges, the doors of the tents shaded by arbors of green boughs, under which sat the squaws in their red, green, and white blankets. On the plain fed herds of horses, and among them Indian riders galloped about seeking the animals they wanted to lariat for the next day's hunting expedition.

With the end of the wagon road came the question of further transportation. Between North-western Montana and the settlements in Northern Idaho and Washington Territory there is but one road—the old Mullan road—and that is impassable before the middle of July, because of the high water in the mountain streams. The most practicable way of getting to the other side of the huge wall of the Bitter Root Mountains and the Cœur d'Alenes, their northern extension, is to go around them by following Clark's Fork down to Pend d'Oreille Lake. This is the route surveyed for the Northern Pacific Railroad, whose engineers sought in vain for a pass that could be surmounted, and reluctantly turned the line northward, making a considerable détour. A trail runs through the dense forest along the river from the little saw-mill town of Weeksville to the end of the railroad, working southward up the valley from Pend d'Oreille Lake; and getting over it is only a matter of rough riding with a pack-train and three nights' camping in the solitudes of the woods. In some places the mountains, walling in the swift river, are too precipitous for even a bridle-path to cling to their sides. Then you scramble up to their summits, dragging your beast after you; but the climb is rewarded by magnificent views of the snowy ranges to the westward, the somber forest of pines, firs, and larches filling all the narrow valley, and the winding river far below looking like a canal, so regular is the outline of its banks.

The great Pend d'Oreille forest stretching

across the north-west corner of Montana and the pan-handle of Idaho into Eastern Washington is by no means forbidding and melancholy, when once you are in its depths. It is all a vast flower-garden. There is scarcely a square foot of the ground, save in the dark recesses along the courses of the small streams, which does not bear a blossom. You can gather handfuls of wild roses, without dismounting, almost anywhere along the trail; the white three-leaved Mariposa flower abounds; the quaint moccasin flower displays its clusters of dainty white slippers; there are patches of wild sunflowers, and a dozen other varieties; the service-berry bushes bear blossoms like the English hawthorn; festoons of light green moss hang from the branches of the trees; white clover makes the air fragrant, and scores of unnamed flowers brighten the glades. The woods are a pasture-field as well as a garden. Rich grasses grow luxuriantly. Our horses, turned loose every evening, found feed enough to keep in good condition for the hard work of the journey. Deer were seen every morning among the horses; fresh tracks of cinnamon and black bears were often found on the trail, and one day a wolf trotted across the path. The country abounds in game, and will one day, when the railroad makes it accessible, be a favorite resort for hunters, who will take home as trophies of their prowess, antlers of elk and deer, heads of the white mountain goat, and the huge, uncouth mountain sheep, and skins of bears, wolves, foxes, and badgers. There are plenty of speckled trout in the swift, cold streams that dash down from the mountain gorges to the river, and the least experienced fisherman has no difficulty in catching them with any sort of bait, so ignorant are they of the tricks of the angler.

Nor is the forest altogether lonely. Occasionally a pack-train is met, or a party of pedestrians, tramping with blankets, provisions, and frying-pans from the settlements or railroad camps west of the mountains to those in the mountain valleys, and sleeping *al fresco* wherever night overtakes them. Rough fellows these, but good-humored, and in no way dangerous. Indeed, there is no danger in any of the country I traversed on my north-western pilgrimage, to a traveler who minds his own business and keeps out of drinking dens. Almost everybody I met had a big pistol strapped to his hip, but I carried no weapon of any kind, and never once felt the need of one.

In Montana every traveler carries his bed, whether he depends upon hoofs or wheels for locomotion, or on his own legs. Even

the tramp who foots it over the prairies and through the mountains, pretending to look for work, but really on a summer pleasure tour, subsisting upon the country, has a pair of dirty blankets or an old quilt slung by a rope across his shoulders. The sleeping equipment of a traveler who can afford to pay some attention to comfort, consists of a buffalo robe and two pairs of blankets. With these, and perhaps a rubber poncho, he is prepared to stop wherever night overtakes him, fortunate if he has a roof over his head, and a pine floor to spread his buffalo upon, but ready to camp out under the stars. Along the stage roads one is rarely more than twenty miles from a house of some kind, but no one expects beds. The ranchman does not ask his guests if they would like to go to bed; he says: "Well, gents, are you ready to spread your blankets?"

Camping and traveling in the forest was a delightful experience, spite of rain and fatigue; but no one of our party was sorry one morning to be met on the river's bank by an engineer, who brought a package of letters, and the information that the camps of the Chinese graders on the railroad were just across the river, that there was a wagon-road to the end of the track, and that he had a skiff and two rowers to set us across the turbulent current. We had traversed the whole distance (six hundred miles) between the ends of the railroad, which are advancing to meet next year on the summit of the Rocky Mountains. The news that we should see a locomotive that very day was received with enthusiasm. It meant beds, baths, clean clothes, newspapers, telegrams, napkins, silver forks, and a hundred other things never noticed or appreciated until out of reach. We rearranged our luggage, bestowed our bedding upon the half-breed Indian, the Kentucky negro, and the white lad, who jointly managed the pack-train, got over the river, and were soon driving through the camps of three thousand Chinese laborers. It was Sunday, and work on the grade was suspended. The canvas town swarmed with men. Some were having their heads shaved, others were combing and winding their pig-tails; others, stripped to their waist, were enjoying a sponge bath. One man was on his knees going through some religious ceremony over a chicken before dissecting it for the pot. There were Chinese stores, Chinese restaurants, and Chinese gaming tents. For fifteen miles the woods were literally full of Mongolians. Not a feature of their Asiatic life do they abandon, save that, from the necessity of working in mud and dust, they wear American boots. Their basket hats, blue blouses, and loose trousers are sup-

plied by Chinese merchants, and a large portion of their food—their rice and dried fish, and all their sweetmeats and dainties—comes across the Pacific. The road was lined with Chinamen driving fat hogs to the camps to be slaughtered for the Sunday dinner, or carrying bundles and boxes, and boards for tent-flooring, suspended to bamboo poles, balanced on the shoulders in the exact style of the pictures on the tea-chests.

The Chinese laborers on the railroad earn one dollar and sixteen cents a day, and are hired by gangs of forty from agents of the Six Companies in San Francisco. The usual estimate of the effectiveness of their labor is that three Chinamen are equal to two white men; but the superintendent of construction on the railroad asserts that he prefers the Chinese, man for man, to such white labor as can be had on the Pacific coast.

The railroad operations have caused to grow up at Cabinet Landing, a grotesque and hideous town of tents and shanties clinging to the hill-side, among the pines,—a town subsisting on the wants and weaknesses of the working men, and flaunting in their faces facilities for all the coarser forms of vice. Across the river from this pandemonium of frontier dirt, drunkenness, and debauchery, is another transient railroad town, where the engineers and overseers live, with their wives and children in clean tents, prettily embowered with evergreens. A swift ride of six miles down the rapid stream, in a yawl pulled by two stout oarsmen, brought us to a waiting train, and twenty miles by rail around the shores of Lake Pend d'Oreille, to the raw pine village of Sand Point, standing with its feet in the swollen waters of the lake, completed the day's journey. Lake Pend d'Oreille is of such irregular shape that I will not attempt to guess at its length or breadth. Perhaps it is three or four times as large as Lake George. It is surrounded by high mountains, and is in the heart of a vast forest. A foreign comparison for its bold, rocky precipices and snow-flecked peaks would best be found in the Königsee of the Bavarian Alps; but no comparison could do justice to the mosquitoes that dispute the occupancy of its shores with the railroad workmen. These pests have their one virtue, however. They draw off their forces at dark, and do not resume their attacks until daybreak.

Out of the woods next day, leaving the lake and the mountains behind and running across green plains past a few feeble beginnings of villages, with here and there a potato-patch or a wheat-field; past herds of horses fattening on the tall bunch-grass, past pine-clad hills and swift, cold trout streams, to

Spokane Falls, a budding town that hopes to grind the product of the new wheat region of Eastern Washington, and thus become the Minneapolis of the Pacific Coast. Its ambition in this direction rests upon the falls of the Spokane River, a superb water-power and a superb picture, too. The river, first dividing into three channels, makes three separate falls of about thirty feet, and then uniting its transparent green waters, plunges down a sheer descent of sixty feet, throwing up steaming columns of spray. Some small milling and wood-sawing industries have already grown up here, and the town, though barely two years old, counts twelve hundred inhabitants, and is clean, orderly, and respectable beyond the attainments of most new settlements in the North-west. North and north-west of it lies a good farming country just beginning to attract population. Southward is a belt of rocky forest land seven miles wide, and beyond that begins the high, grassy, billowy plateau that skirts the bases of the Coeur d'Alene, Bitter Root, and Blue Mountains for two hundred and fifty miles, with an average breadth of fifty miles, and constitutes the most productive new wheat-field in the United States. To see this wonderful new granary of the far West I went just an hour's journey farther by rail to Cheney (an energetic, successful village in the pine forest belt, named for a Boston capitalist, who has recently shown his sensible appreciation of the honor by giving it ten thousand dollars for a school-building), and then traveled southward by vehicles of one sort and another for five days, visiting the towns of Colfax, Moscow, Lewiston, Pomeroy, Dayton, and Walla-Walla. The immense grain and pasture country of Eastern Washington, lapping over a little into Idaho on the east and into Oregon on the south, is a region so peculiar in its natural features and its climate that it can be compared with no other. The well-worn simile of a sea in a storm might be applied to its surface, and would describe the fluid-like irregularity of the shape of the green hills; but the hills are ten times as high as the longest Atlantic storm waves. Their soil is a deep rich brown loam, with a basaltic foundation and a small admixture of alkali—the best possible grain-producing compound. Slopes, crests, and deep, narrow valleys are alike fertile. In its natural state the whole face of the country is covered with a heavy growth of bunch-grass and wild sunflowers, the sunflower plants growing separately among the grass at intervals of three or four feet. There is no timber save alder and willow along the streams, and a little stunted pine in the slopes of the profound depressions

made by the longer water-courses. Lumber for building and rails for fences must be hauled from the mountains. This is the only serious drawback the settlers of this new region have to contend with, and it will soon be modified when the roads building by the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company reach the mountains. Cedar posts will then be easily obtained, and the barbed wire, so much used of late in the prairie States, will take the place of fence-rails.

The southern portion of the region around Walla-Walla and Dayton is tolerably well settled, and driving over its dusty roads, one is rarely out of sight of neat farm-houses, orchards, and fields of wheat and barley. In the northern portion nine-tenths of the land lies open, and much of it is still in the possession of the Government and available for homestead claims. Here the little, unpainted, one-room houses show that the people are just beginning, with small means, to open new farms. Life seems narrow and dreary in one of these shabby board boxes, without shade or shrubbery, and with no prospect but the grass and the sunflowers on the steep hill-sides; but give the new settler a few years' start, and he will have a painted house of three or four rooms, a good barn, a garden, and a young orchard and ten acres of growing forest-trees planted and cared for, in order to obtain an additional quarter-section of land under the Timber-culture Act. His fields of wheat, flax, and barley will be thrown like mantles of green and gold over the surrounding hills, and his herds of cattle and horses will graze for miles around.

Attracted by a pretty farmstead, which contrasted strikingly with the bare board shanties I had passed during the morning's ride, I stopped one day to ask for dinner—a repast never denied in the far West. The people were from Ashtabula County, Ohio, and their farm and house showed how much comfort can be got by industry, taste, and thrift in this newest of all the new farming regions of the United States. There was a neat grassy doorway in front of the pretty house, and back of it a garden with currant and raspberry bushes, strawberry beds, and young cherry trees. An orchard of plums and hardy apples covered a neighboring slope, and a plantation of box-alders was growing near the big barn to make a wind-break. The table was soon spread in the living-room, and the company was increased by the arrival of a rosy-cheeked daughter—"first of the hive to swarm," explained the mother—who came with her husband from a farm near by which he had just "taken up." The land of my host probably cost him nothing five years ago. With the

improvements he has put upon it, he counts it worth twenty dollars an acre.

Different parts of the region I am describing have local names derived from the streams that water them,—pretty names when taken from the Nez-Perce Indian language,—such as the Palouse Country, the Alpowa Country, the Assotin Country, and the Pat-aha Country; common-place or ugly, like most frontier names, when invented by the settlers, like Pine Creek, Thorn Creek, Dead-man's Creek, and Hangman's Creek. Snake River, running north until it receives the Clear-water at Lewiston, turns sharply to the west and cuts this region across about midway of its length. This powerful stream, broad, rapid, and turbid, flows in a bare, basaltic crevice two thousand feet below the general level of the country it drains.

Where thirty bushels of wheat to the acre are an average crop, and fifty not an extraordinary one, and there is never a failure of a crop, the settler, even though the price be only fifty cents a bushel, soon gets forehanded. While his crops are growing, his herds are increasing on the wide, natural pastures. Horses thrive out of doors the year round. North of Snake River, the farmers find it prudent to lay by a little winter fodder for cattle, and for this purpose sow a mixed crop of wheat and oats to cut green, or harvest the volunteer crop of wheat which comes up on unplowed stubble fields. A horse will paw the snow off the dry bunch-grass and shift very well for himself; but when there is a deep snow-fall, a steer seeks a hollow in the hills and stands there till he dies.

The energetic farmer in this region, I have said, soon gets a fair share of the comforts of life about him. There is one class of settlers, however, who seem never to get beyond the bare-board-cabin period; they are the Missourians. Population in Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon is divided into two distinct elements—the Missourians and the people from other States. It is marvelous how many pioneers the half-settled State of Missouri has sent to the farther West, and equally marvelous is the faculty of inertia they display as to progress in civilization. The Missourian is an anomaly. He is a frontiersman by instinct, constantly emigrating to newer countries, and yet he lacks the energy to build a comfortable house, or cultivate a good crop, or put a serviceable fence around his land. Bayard Taylor once remarked upon the hostility of the Missourian to trees. His house stands in the glaring sun. If nature has provided a tree near by he cuts it down. Probably the reason is that he is too lazy to go far for wood, and consumes the

timber nearest at hand to broil his bacon and bake his corn pone. There are, it is only fair to say, a few active, competent people from Missouri in the towns of the North-west, but the rural population from that State is a dead weight upon any section they inhabit. It is a common saying in all the Western territories, that the left wing of "Pap" Price's army, after the Rebel defeat at Pica Ridge, never stopped running until it got beyond the Rocky Mountains. This saying has some basis of fact. Thousands of Price's soldiers deserted after the battle, and, returning home, put their families and valuables on wheels and crossed over the plains with ox-teams to the newly discovered mining gulches of Idaho, Montana, and Oregon. The dispersion of Price's army can only partly account, however, for the large population of Missouri origin to be found on the Pacific slope and in the Rocky Mountains. We must give these peculiar people, whom Col. John Hay has put into literature in his Pike County Ballads, credit for a deal of enterprise and hardihood in getting a long way off from their birth-place. Though satisfied with poor living, alleviated only by tobacco and whisky, they are good movers.

At Colfax, a busy little town squeezed into a mile of the crevice of the Palouse River Valley, I saw a large number of Spokane and Nez-Percé Indians, gorgeously arrayed in scarlet, yellow, and green. They were on their way to some rendezvous where they have an annual picnic and horse-race, and were spending a few days in the village, selling tough little ponies for ten dollars apiece, and drinking up all the essences in the drug-stores in lieu of whisky. There is a heavy penalty for selling liquor to an Indian. The law is broken by stealth, but the red man cannot always find a white brother willing to take the chances of imprisonment for half a dollar, so he is obliged to fall back on essences. It is a common mistake in the East to suppose that the Indians are confined upon their reservations. They roam over the white man's country pretty much as they please, but jealously keep the white man out of their territory. They are the aristocracy of the West: "they toil not, neither do they spin." Life is a continual excursion and holiday. With their Government blankets and annuities, and the proceeds of the sale of their ponies, the men are quite independent. They have money to buy fine felt hats, and feathers at the millinery stores to stick in them, and they are great consumers of vermilion paint, which they daub on their faces without regard to expense. The squaws get only a very moderate amount of the finery and paint; as with birds, the male sports the fine plumage. The tall, well-

made "bucks," arrayed in green blankets, red leggings, and white felt hats stuck around with feathers and tinsel, stalk about the streets of the frontier towns, looking scornfully upon the white people who work for a living, and no doubt regarding them as poor creatures.

The climate of the high, hilly plateau drained by Snake River and its tributaries is peculiar. The winters are about as cold as those of Maryland or Southern Ohio. There is some snow, two or three weeks of sleighing, perhaps, a few cold snaps, and a good deal of mild, open weather. In the summer the days are clear and hot, and the nights so cool that a pair of blankets are needed for comfort. Hot nights are unknown. Rain falls in light showers through June, but after that time there are three months of rainless weather, when the harvesting proceeds leisurely, the grain being threshed in the fields as soon as cut. There is a great difference, however, between the climate of the uplands, where the elevation is twenty-five hundred feet above the sea, and that of the deep, sunken river valleys. In going down from the plateau into the Snake River Valley at Lewiston, you seem to pass in an hour from the summer temperature of Maine to that of South Carolina. Never have I seen a more singular and striking landscape effect than that which suddenly burst into view one evening as I came out on the edge of the plateau above the junction of the Snake and Clearwater rivers. I had been traveling for sixty miles that day, up hill and down, among grain and flax fields and great sweeps of open bunch-grass country, the *Coeur d'Alene* Mountains ahead, now and then a farm-house in a hollow, and for a noon halt the smart, growing village of Moscow, just across the Idaho line,—not conscious any of the time of being above the ordinary level of a hill country,—when toward sunset the ground suddenly disappeared in front of my horses' heads, and there, two thousand feet below, in almost sheer descent, lay a little checker-board of a town at the meeting of two magnificent rivers. It was Lewiston—the houses mere white specks in a mass of foliage, the brown country brightened here and there by a square of green grain-field, rising in ridges to the Craig Mountains. How to get down into the warm nether region of water and verdure, where the town lay seemingly within a stone's throw, was a problem that appeared difficult, but was easily enough solved by a half-hour's fast drive down a zigzag road cut in the cliff side. With its rows of tall poplars and its groves of fruit-trees, Lewiston looks from the steep mountain road like some French

village on the Marne or the Meuse, and the illusion is heightened as you approach, by the sign "Hotel de France" on a cream-colored building half hidden by shade. It vanishes, however, when you get over the ferry on the dusty business street, bordered by mean little one-story wooden buildings. Yet the place is one of the most attractive of all the frontier towns, from the abundance of foliage and the pretty door-yards, with their lush turf, and their shrubbery and flowers,—rare adornments in this raw, utilitarian West. The heights one descends to reach the town from the country north of the Clearwater and the Snake, viewed from the valley, are bold, bare mountains of basaltic rock scantily covered with dry herbage. Their creased and bulging slopes, strangely colored in all shades of brown, have a fantastic appearance, and when their singular hues are brightened by sunset tints they look like the paint-and-canvas creation of the brain of some opium-eating artists rather than like real mountains of nature's own make.

Lewiston lies in Idaho, just across the line, and here the North Idaho question is sure to be put before the visitor. The mountain range, which at the end of the shank of the leg-of-mutton shaped territory divides it from Washington, bears off to the east, and leaves three good agricultural counties along its base. These counties have no relations with the other settled regions of Idaho except an enforced political one; and they demand separation and annexation to Washington, with which they are identical in their business interests and the character of their country. A range of mountains eighty miles across, and passable only by an Indian trail, divides them from South Idaho, and they are forced to make a détour of six hundred miles through Washington and Oregon to reach the territorial capital at Boise City. All their lines of communication with the rest of the world lead by river and road across an artificial boundary traced on a map by a meridian line to the towns of Washington and Oregon. Their reasonable request is, that when Washington is admitted as a State they be joined to it. The only opposition to this plan comes from the politicians of South Idaho, who do not want to lose the taxes on the seven thousand prosperous people inhabiting the northern counties. Besides Lewiston, with its twelve hundred inhabitants, there lie in this region, Moscow with nearly a thousand, and half a dozen little budding towns living on trade with the grain farmers and stock-raisers. The eastward indentation in the mountain chain is thirty miles deep, and is drained by the Clearwater and its tributaries. The richest portion of it is called the Potlatch country.

Right across it lies the Nez-Percé Reservation, which the Lewiston people are eager to have broken up. Wherever there is an Indian reservation the white settlers near by want it abolished. They look upon the Indian as a cumberer of the ground, and would order him to move on if they could. The Nez-Percés are tolerably well advanced in civilization. One of them has sold eight thousand dollars' worth of horses and cattle this year. There are seventy houses on the reservation, but the occupants pitch their lodges close by, and would doubtless relapse into a nomadic life if the Government did not constantly encourage them to till the soil and look after their stock. These Nez-Percés look like harmless people. One of them dined near me at the hotel in Lewiston, and his manner of feeding was, if anything, a trifle less greedy than that of some of the white guests. It was the cousins of these same tamed barbarians, however, who, under Chief Joseph, refused to go on the reservation, cut the throats of the wives and children of the settlers on the Cottonwood, and massacred Lieutenant Raines and his thirteen soldiers. The Nez-Percé war was the tragedy of North Idaho, and the people are never weary of reciting this epic of the frontier, with its scenes of heroism and horror. It would be folly for the Government to bring back Joseph and his exiled band to the reservation. Their lives would not be safe from the wrath of the relatives and neighbors of the murdered settlers.

South and west of Lewiston the good arable country sweeps around by the base of the Blue Mountains to Walla-Walla, a distance of ninety miles. The whole fertile belt of East Washington, I have said before, may roughly be measured as two hundred and fifty miles long by fifty broad. It is all fertile, and amazingly fertile too. There is absolutely no waste land in it, save on the steep slopes of the Snake River Cañon. It is sparsely settled as yet, but immigrants are steadily streaming in, and it will soon contain a dense agricultural population. It is a better grain country than even Eastern Dakota, the average yield being considerably larger. Besides this magnificent farming belt, all parts of which are alike in their general characteristics of elevation, hilly surface, and uniformly productive soil, East Washington contains two other fertile regions: the Big Bend country, lying in the sweep of the Columbia—an extensive plain just beginning to attract settlers—and the Yakima country, a series of narrow valleys on the eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains. I have not visited either of them. Both are said to be good stock and wheat sections.

In traveling through the country south of Snake River (Lewis River, the people of Lewiston insist that it should be called,) I saw the rival villages of Pomeroy and Pataha City fighting each other at a distance of three miles for the honor and profit of the county-seatship of the new county of Garfield, and passed a night in the older and larger town of Dayton, snugly seated among elms and willows in a bend of the Touchet River. It is bustling and prosperous.

My journey next took me to Walla-Walla, largest and handsomest of all the East Washington towns. Doubtless the name of Walla-Walla brings no suggestion to the minds of most readers in the far-away East, save of a rude frontier settlement. Yet the place luxuriates in verdure and bloom, and many of its shady streets, bordered by pretty houses, with their lawns, orchards and gardens, would be admired in a New England village, while the business streets would do no discredit to an Ohio town of half a century's growth. In the homes of well-to-do citizens one finds the magazines and new books and newspapers from New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and discovers that they manage to keep abreast of the ideas of the time quite as well as intelligent people on the Atlantic slope. The town has five thousand inhabitants, but in its importance as a center of trade and social influences it represents an Eastern town of many times its size. There is barely a trace of the frontier in the manners of the people, and none at all in their comfortable way of living; yet they are thousands of miles from New York by the only route of steam travel. A fairer or more fertile country than that which stretches south and east of Walla-Walla to the base of the Blue Mountains one might travel more than five thousand miles to find. In June it is all one immense rolling field of wheat and barley dotted at long intervals—for the farms are large—with neat houses, each in its orchard of apple and peach trees. The mountains rise in gentle slopes to snow-flecked summits. Over the wide plain move tall, tawny cloud-like columns of dust, in size and shape like water-spouts at sea. From the foot-hills scores of these singular formations may be seen on any warm day, though the air seems still.

If the reader has followed me in my notes of travel through "The New North-west" in

this and previous numbers of this magazine, he will observe that the whole country traversed through the northern tier of territories from Eastern Dakota to Washington is a habitable region. There will be no break in the line. No alkali and greasewood desert lies across the path of settlement, to make a blank space in future maps and divide the civilization of the North Pacific coast from that of the nearer North-west. This is an important fact for the statesman and sociologist to consider in their forecasts of the progress of the American Republic, and the development of the new American race now in process of amalgamation from diverse elements of Puritan and Southerner, Teuton, Celt, and Scandinavian, African, Mongolian, and Red Indian. The two coasts of the continent will be tied together by a broad band of continuously populated country, reaching from the Red River of the North to the mouth of the Columbia.

Indeed, the vacant spaces on this belt are already occupied here and there by the bivouacs of the advance guard of the approaching army of settlers. In the course of over six hundred miles of travel between the two ends of the Northern Pacific Railroad I slept under a roof every night, save when on an Indian reservation, or in the great forest on the Clark's Fork of the Columbia. Sometimes the roof was that of a herdsman's hut, or the shanty of an engineer party, but always there was shelter to be found for the night by rightly planning the day's journey. For the entire distance every square mile of the country is valuable either for farming, stock-raising, or timber-cutting. There is absolutely no waste land between the well-settled region of Dakota and the new wheat region of Washington Territory. Even on the tops of the Rocky Mountains there is good pasturage; and the vast timber belt enveloping Clark's Fork and Lake Pend d'Oreille, and the ranges of the Cabinet and Cœur d'Alene Mountains is more valuable than an equal extent of arable land, because it is destined to supply with lumber the treeless regions on both sides of it in Montana and Washington. Save on the ranges of the Rockies and their outlying groups and spurs, the country is practically destitute of good timber all the way east to the pine forests of Minnesota, and westward there is a wide stretch of bare hills and plains to the foot of the Cascade Range.

E. V. Smalley.